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THE NATURAL INSPIRATION AND THE SUPERNATURAL.*

Much has been said and written, especially of late years in England, far from wisely, if always devoutly and in earnest zeal for truth, respecting Divine Inspiration; tending, on the one hand, to bring an unreality into the deep but truly natural experiences of the human heart, by representing them as supernatural or miraculous,—and, on the other hand, to disguise the specialty of Divine Revelation itself, by representing all things in nature and human life as divinely inspired, till the only distinction left (if indeed that be left) would seem to be one of degree.

Thus, on the one hand, the 13th Article of the Church of England, treating on the subject of *Works before Justification*, declares that "works done before the grace of God and the *inspiration* of his Spirit are not pleasant to God, but have the nature of sin." Plainly, by *inspiration* is here meant, not that inspiration of which the Scriptures speak when they say, "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty hath given them understanding," but that supernatural and special visitation of divine grace which Calvinism considers necessary in order to change our nature as first formed by our Creator. Then, in various Collects of the Church of England, we read such petitions as these: "God, who, as at this time" (Whit-Sunday), "didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit, grant us by *the same Spirit* to have a right judgment in all things," &c. Again: "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the *inspiration* of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee." And again: "Grant to us thy servants, that by *thy holy inspiration* we may think those things that be good." All these passages tend unduly to lift the experience of the Christian's daily devotion up to the special and miraculous level of the scriptural scene at the beginning of the book of Acts, where the special gifts of the Holy Spirit were poured out upon the apostles of Christ.

* The Doctrine of Inspiration, being an Inquiry concerning the Infallibility, Inspiration and Authority of Holy Writ. By the Rev. John Macnaught, M.A., Oxon, Incumbent of St. Chrysostom's Church, Everton, Liverpool. Second Edition, revised and corrected.

Then, on the other hand, there are those who would lower the highest scriptural pretensions to the level of the ordinary and natural inspirations of life. What are we to think of declarations such as the following, by Mr. Macnaught, a clergyman of the Church of England, in a book not destitute of important and valuable scriptural criticism, but (as we shall shew more particularly) rash and random in its style, vague and indefinite in the positions which it takes? He says, as the summary of his doctrine on the scriptural subject of Inspiration:

"According to Old Testament custom, whatever was *good, orderly* or *strong*, whether in the adornment of the heavens, in the springing of a blade of grass, in the rolling of rivers, in the mystery of the womb, in the strength of Samson, in the instinct of the owl, in the common thoughts of ordinary men, or in the cleverness and genius of extraordinary men, in the poetry of the Psalmist, or in the predictions and moral teachings of the Prophet,—whatever, in any or in all these matters, or in aught else, was *good*, the Bible writer attributed to the Ruach or Spirit of God, whose action we designate Inspiration."—P. 126.

In a section intitled "Definition of the term Inspiration," he says,

"There is still recognized and admitted, among all believers, the ancient, scriptural, and only true idea of Inspiration, according to which the term signifies *that action of the Divine Spirit by which, apart from any idea of infallibility, all that is good in man, beast or matter, is originated and sustained;* and moreover we conclude that if the internal contents and the historical effects of Holy Writ are grander and better than those of any other book, then the Bible must be regarded as the best, and therefore the most richly inspired, book in the world; and yet, further, we conclude that everything which has any divinely bestowed excellence (i. e. any inspiration) in it, is to be respected on account of its excellence *per se*, and still more on account of that excellence being recognized as coming from God; so that, if the Bible be, as we believe and as we hope presently to shew, the best and most richly inspired book, it will, as a consequence, be reasonably intitled to the devoutest reverence from all men who wish to be either good or wise."—P. 136.

Again, in a section intitled "The Difference between Genius and Inspiration" (p. 132)—(which might more properly be called their identification or confusion together), he makes this avowal:

"The difference between the idea of Genius, in point of fact, and that of Divine Inspiration is, not in the result produced, but in the originator recognized. Thus we—referring Milton's Paradise Lost or Bacon's Novum Organon to the man who wrote each (genius or creative thinker), or to the sprite that was in the man (genius, a heathen dæmon), describe each of these books as 'a work of genius;' but the far truer and grander mode of speaking would be to refer the creative power of thinking to Him who alone made Milton or Bacon to differ from ordinary writers, and thus to call their books works of the Spirit of God, written by Divine Inspiration. In this manner, without a doubt, David, or Solomon, or Isaiah, or Paul, would have spoken of

everything which may with propriety be called a work of genius or of cleverness or of holiness."

Thus it is avowed by this clergyman, that those works of great men which we call works of genius, ought rather to be called inspired works in the very sense in which he ascribes inspiration to the contents of divine revelation. He says, that in calling them works of genius we recognize as their originators merely the human minds that produce them, or an imaginary genius, sprite or heathen dæmon suggesting them; but that, if we would trace them, as we ought, to the Divine Being as the giver of the faculties which produced them, we should call them works of the Spirit of God, written by divine inspiration.

We cannot but think this a very confused and shallow account of the matter, and one which tends to perplex, instead of making clear or explaining, the scriptural idea.

It is perfectly plain to us that the Scriptures speak both of a *natural* or ordinary inspiration, and of a *supernatural* or miraculous one.

The natural inspiration is that in which they trace direct to the Divine Being, without dwelling upon intermediate causes or agents (perhaps often without being distinctly conscious of their existence), all the great abiding phenomena of nature, whether of physical nature in the inanimate world or in the vegetable and animal creations, or of the mental and moral nature of man. The Psalms and other devotional, moral and didactic Scriptures are full of such illustrations. And be it observed, it is essentially the same thought whether these things are ascribed in one place to the *spirit of God*, or in another to his *word*, or his *command*, or the *breath of his mouth*, or elsewhere to the operation of *his hand*.

"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made;
And all the host of them by the breath of his mouth."

"Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled;
Thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust.
Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created,
And thou renewest the face of the earth."

"All the while my breath is in me (says Job),
And the spirit of God is in my nostrils,
My lips shall not speak wickedness,
Nor my tongue utter deceit."

And Elihu, in the same book of Job, says:

"There is a spirit in man,
And the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."

"The spirit of God hath made me,
And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."

There can be no doubt that, in all such cases as these, the Scriptures are speaking of a *natural* inspiration. They are de-

scribing, and the writers are conscious that they are describing, the natural, the ever-recurring, the regular and ordinary, while mysterious and divinely caused phenomena of the creation. They describe them devoutly, if not philosophically. Or rather, in their devout reference to God as the primary source of all, they describe these things most truly when they pass over those intermediate causes which the philosopher now investigates more minutely, and grasp at once the highest conclusions that he has since attained.

All this belongs to that great and true conception, pervading Judaism and its Scriptures, which fills Creation and Providence, the inanimate, the animate and the rational worlds, with the ever-active influence of the living God. The foundation truth of the Hebrew religion was that God is One, unseen but all-present, creating, upholding, blessing everything that exists, acting in every agent around, breathing in the life and informing the intelligence of all that live and all that can lift up thoughts above the earth and beyond the present. Before the actual order of the creation came into existence, the Spirit of God brooded over the chaos. And since the Divine command has bidden all things into harmonious arrangement, they continue age after age according to His ordinance, because all are His servants. To the devout Hebrew, all things speak of God. Sun, moon and stars, which other nations worship, are to him Heaven's choristers singing the glory of the Great God. The mysterious, but resistless, forces of Nature are His Word, His Spirit, or the angels of His pleasure. Life is instinct with His love. Reason is the candle of the Lord in the soul of man.

All this, properly understood, is the truest philosophy of Creation, Providence and the Human Mind. That God is in all, and over all and through all His works, is the devout anticipation, on the part of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, of the sublimest conclusions of our moderm science, which looks through all-prevailing Law to its source in supreme Intelligence, Power and Love. So that one of the greatest blessings which we derive from the supernatural in the Jewish and Christian Revelations is when we carry a true spirit to the appreciation of the constant divine doings in nature and providence and, above all, in man. Such is the *natural* inspiration with which the Scriptures make us conversant.

But is it not equally plain that they also point to a *supernatural* inspiration, as the source of the great truths and influences of revealed religion? Can any one doubt that the writers of these books believed Moses to have been inspired by God to teach the Jewish nation the great lessons of their pure religion, in some more special sense than that in which Elihu says that the inspiration of the Almighty hath given him understanding? Can any one doubt that Moses claimed, and was understood by

all his disciples to have rightly claimed, a supernatural inspiration of revealed truth, added to his natural possession of the spirit of understanding?

Or can any one doubt that the apostles and evangelists of Jesus Christ believed that, in addition to the natural faculties with which he was inspired as a man (of however fine order of religious capability), his soul was favoured with supernatural inspirations of religious truth and love, constituting that gospel which he was commissioned to preach, that revelation which he was to superadd to the previous revelation by Moses, and to offer to the acceptance and blessing of mankind without distinction of nation, kindred, tongue or people? Can any one doubt that Jesus Christ himself gave expression to such a belief on his own part, when he spoke of doing the works which his Heavenly Father had shewn him, and speaking the words which he had heard from God, and giving to his disciples the words which God had given to him? Can any one seriously interpret that expression of his own lips, that "God gave the spirit to him not by measure," as fairly meaning that his natural faculties were like those of Milton or Bacon (we feel a sort of profaneness almost in confronting the suggestion),—that they were what the world would call genius if contemplating the creative thinker only, but might more truly and grandly describe as inspiration, if it would refer them far enough back, with all other natural gifts, to the great Originator?

But it is hinted that David, Solomon, Isaiah or Paul, would, from their limited view of mental phenomena, have spoken thus of what we call works of genius or cleverness.

Then, let us ask, what do we ourselves, as calm observers from our wider point of view in this advanced scientific age, think it rational to pronounce respecting those two great springs of religious thought and emotion which Judaism and Christianity severally represent, when we view them in broad outline in connection with their times, places and surroundings?

Is Judaism, with its great and pure idea of one only, all-pervading, spiritual God, to be taken as the *natural inspiration* of that singular little nation who, century after century, held up the light of this grand idea in the face of the greatest nations of antiquity, the Egyptian, the Assyrian, the Babylonish, the Persian, the Greek, the Roman, all of them far higher in civilization, all of them deep immersed in the more evidently natural inspiration of idolatry?

Or was Christianity, in its turn, with its open heaven for Jew and Gentile, the natural inspiration of this excluded and exclusive Jewish people? Is its Heavenly Father the natural inspiration of minds that have passionately implored the aid of Jehovah's might against the idols and the idolaters? Is its spiritual worship the natural inspiration of those who have, by divine

appointment as they firmly believe, striven hard to obey a law of minute external ceremony? Is its doctrine of immortality the natural inspiration of those whose hopes, always strongly national, were just then glowing with unwonted pride, while ready to welcome their expected temporal Messiah?

As plain as, in the light of modern physical science, it appears that the venerable writers of the Scriptures referred the great and wonderful, but ordinary and constant, operations of nature, both in the universe and in man, to the divine inspiration as the ultimate law of their being,—so plain, in the light of human history and under the best exposition of the natural human faculties, does it appear to us that the Scriptures most rationally and rightly ascribe to a supernatural inspiration of those faculties which are man's by nature, the origin of the two great religious movements to which the progress of pure religion is everywhere to be traced.

It matters not to this large and general view of the question (that is to say, it does not invalidate this general conclusion, though it shews that there are many connected topics of a doubtful and difficult kind) that we find a multitude of instances in the Scriptures of an intermediate order, between those in which we have no doubt that the writers correctly felt they were describing the natural inspirations of God, and those in which they correctly felt that they were describing the decidedly supernatural. It matters not that, in some instances, it is not clear to us whether they thought the thing described was natural or was supernatural. It matters not that, in some instances in which they seem to describe it as supernatural, we may see reason to regard it as having been natural. We ought to expect, with our modern insight into long hidden natural causes, that some of those things may be more clear to us than to men of old time.

When Moses, for instance, is ordered "to take Joshua the son of Nun, a *man in whom is the spirit*, and lay his hand on him," to designate him as his successor in the leadership of the people, we may be satisfied to think this refers to his natural qualifications, though we may not be sure that the Jewish writer or all the Jewish readers have thought so.

When the historian of the times of the Judges tells us that "the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah" just before he set out on his warlike expedition and vowed his barbarian vow, we may more than doubt, from our Christian point of view, the correctness of the implied Jewish thought.

When Bezaleel, the chief of the workmen in constructing the tabernacle, is described as "filled with the spirit of God in wisdom and in understanding, and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold and in silver and in brass and in cutting of stones to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship,"—

we cannot avoid wondering either that his evidently natural attainments should have been described in this language, or that the writer should have thought them supernatural and meant to describe them as such.

But we intirely sympathize with the feeling which, in contemplating the higher and purer emotions of the human soul in its search for divine wisdom and its manifestation of devotional feeling, whether joyful or sorrowful, ever claims the conscious presence and aid of the Holy Spirit. Nor perhaps do we minutely ask ourselves on all such occasions, whether the meaning of the sacred writer distinctly was to describe that holy presence in the heart as its natural or its supernatural inspiration.

Nor do we, while thus claiming a supernatural inspiration for the revealed principles of Judaism and of Christianity respectively, invest with supernatural inspiration every saying or every act of those by whom the revelation is given. To ascribe such an inspiration to all the recorded words of Moses would be felt by us to be little less than profane, when we read through the long detail of his laws, which describe every board and socket, every curtain and loop belonging to the tabernacle, and every minute ceremony to be transacted in it. To ascribe every recorded word of Jesus Christ to supernatural inspiration would be to rob the natural inspiration of his beautiful and holy manhood of its due. We must not make all his sayings and doings supernatural, though we cannot, without strange violence, attempt to regard them all as merely natural.

Still less shall we, while holding both the natural and the supernatural inspiration of Scripture teachers, regard those subordinate minds who have reflected and perpetuated the great religious influences derived from the revelations in question, as themselves speaking always or very often by direct supernatural inspiration. Is not the spirit of the book of Psalms, of Job, the Proverbs, the natural result of the reception of those divinely-taught religious views, for the origin of which we have been compelled by philosophy itself to claim a supernatural source? Why should we be surprised and utterly shocked (though we may be pained) to find thoughts of human weakness and feelings of human passion mingling with the piety of a Jewish king? Better, wiser, more truly reverent, by far, is it to recognize the naturally-inspired faculty of the poet, using as its materials both the natural inspiration of the works of God around him, and the supernatural treasures of divine revelation which have been transmitted to him through his forefathers from the days of the Patriarchs and the Lawgiver. So with the Jewish Prophets; it is a most ignorant, a most useless, and a most perplexing idea, to regard all their poems which have been preserved to us as so many oracles of supernatural inspiration. The inspired principles of the Jewish religion filled their minds and hearts, and became, like all

other sources of devotional and moral appeal, the materials which fed their natural powers of mind and heart; and this kind of inspiration is, to say the least, very often the sufficient explanation of their stirring appeals to their fellow-countrymen.

And so with the Christian apostles and evangelists. What an injustice is it to read their histories of Christ's inspired life, and their letters in illustration of his inspired religion, under the oppression of the common idea that those loving and admiring disciples are telling their history and uttering their appeals, not from the simple fervour with which their own hearts and minds have received the gospel, but under a new inspiration supernaturally guiding them, or guiding perhaps nothing but their pens! What! was there not a spirit in these men by nature? Had not the breath of the Almighty given them understanding, and affections too? Did not the gospel of the word of life which they had seen and heard and handled, give, by natural influence, new inspiration to their natural faculties, in telling what they knew and dilating on what they rejoicingly believed? And what if even they have not always kept the line sharply and clearly drawn between the natural inspiration and the supernatural, in what they have told us of the inspired gifts of the early Christian church? Not the less for this shall we believe in the supernatural wisdom and love of the gospel as taught by Christ, nor the less in its adaptation to promote the best natural inspiration of our minds and hearts. O not the less, but all the more, should we prize the writings in which they have embodied the spirit of the gospel revelation; not the less, but all the more, may their writings, so full of their human perception and feeling as applied to the divine faith committed to their ministrations, prove profitable to us, in our devout use of them, "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," that every one whose desire it is to be a child of God "may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

There are two modes of approaching, if we may not say of settling, this question of Inspiration as connected with revealed religion. The one is, to take the clear cases at each end of the series,—those of purely natural inspiration on the one hand, those of decidedly supernatural on the other,—and to leave, with whatever intellectual reluctance, a considerable extent of dubious ground between these extremes. The other method is, to begin with the clearly natural, and go determinedly and self-reliantly through the doubtful cases, resolutely naturalizing everything at every step, till, when we have reached the highest, and to most persons the indisputably miraculous, inspiration of the gospel, we have no word at hand but *genius* as descriptive of Jesus Christ viewed as "creative thinker," or *inspiration* (in its merely natural sense), if his power be referred back, with the strength of Samson, the cunning workmanship of Bezaleel, and

the writings of Milton and Bacon, to Him who made the thinker, the workman and the poet.

The former is the method we have sketched in the above remarks; the latter is Mr. Macnaught's mode of procedure.

The question of external miracles admits of being handled with the same diversity of touch. There are many things which to the vulgar orthodox reader of the Scriptures, appear, as, of course, miraculous, but which are quite otherwise to the intelligent. There are some things which are even represented as miraculous by the writers, but are not clearly so to the intelligent reader. But to march stealthily upwards thus into the very citadel of Christianity, and plant the standard of natural causation on the opened grave of Lazarus or that of Christ himself, however fascinating the attempt to Paulus and Strauss, is scarcely deemed practicable now even in Germany. With one broad touch of light, Dr. Channing long ago cleared away the doubtful miracles from interference with the unquestionable ones; and the same kind of observation is equally applicable to the question of natural and supernatural Inspiration.

"It is indeed true, that human powers are not exactly defined, nor can we state precisely the bounds beyond which they cannot pass; but still, the disproportion between human nature and an effect ascribed to it, may be so vast and palpable, as to satisfy us at once that the effect is inexplicable by human power. I know not precisely what advances may be made by the intellect of a savage; but that a savage in the woods could not compose the Principia of Newton, is about as plain as that he could not create the world. I know not the point at which bodily strength must stop; but that a man cannot carry Atlas or Andes on his shoulders, is a safe position. The question, therefore, whether the principles of human nature, under the circumstances in which it was placed at Christ's birth, will explain his religion, is one to which we are competent, and is the great question on which the whole controversy turns." (Dudleian Lect., Evid. of Rev. Religion, 1821.)

This question, fairly put and answered, we firmly believe, must refer the religion of Jesus Christ, as propounded by himself, to a supernatural inspiration. Not more clearly were his works superhuman when he raised the dead, than his words and aims as expressed in his life and instructions. He was an inspired man in a special, supernatural sense, which it is irrelevant in argument, if not profane in thought, to confound with the genius of Milton and Bacon.

But the biblical question of Inspiration has been too commonly treated as if identical with the dreary question of the verbal inspiration of the Bible. The two questions, as every thinker must perceive, are quite distinct; and to distinguish the one from the other is of first importance. It is one question, whether certain men have been miraculously inspired to teach certain religious principles and hopes; it is another question, whether certain other men (or even those men themselves) have

been miraculously guided to write a record of their lives and instructions. The former is the real claim of the Bible as a record of revelation; the latter is the vulgar, unthinking, half-believing but dogmatizing way of presenting the claims of religion to the acceptance of zealots and to the ridicule of critical minds. The two theories must be carefully discriminated. The inspiration of the book as a book, or of the writers as writers of it, must be renounced as a claim unknown to the book and its writers; and then first can we be in a position to judge fairly of the inspiration of the persons, or acts, or sayings, on behalf of which it is really claimed. Mr. Macnaught seems to have no practical perception of this distinction. He disproves (if that be necessary) the verbal inspiration of the Bible as a book. He patiently adduces a large number of those discrepancies which make it plain to every open eye and clear head that there is no such thing as the book-inspiration which is commonly believed in. But he does not (as we had hoped to see him do) remove the supernatural from the mere verbal record to the men and things recorded. He does not point out the rational distinction between regarding the Scriptures as themselves *a revelation*, and taking them to be *the records of revelation*. This distinction, which is palpable to the readers of our pages, is quite missed by this clergyman. Instead of this, he labours to shew that *inspiration is not equivalent to infallibility;* and he thinks he proves this by pointing out various errors and contradictions in the Scriptures. But does he not thereby prove rather (if his proof be sound) that the Scriptures in those cases are *neither* inspired *nor* infallible? Or does he not make inspiration meaningless, so far as the argument is concerned? Holding, as we do, both the natural inspiration and the supernatural, as attributes of the Scriptures and their contents, appropriately to the various occasions presented, we maintain that the supernatural inspiration, instead of being thus separable from the idea of infallibility, is virtually identical with it, or implies it as its consequence. The *natural* inspiration is quite a different thing; and it is a mere truism to say that there is no infallibility in the natural faculties of man. But if Jesus Christ was supernaturally inspired with the high doctrines of God our Father, Providence ever near, Prayer always availing, and Immortality begun on earth, we feel that we must take these his inspired doctrines as infallible ones. Only shew us *where* the supernatural inspiration breathes, and we feel that it breathes absolute truth. The mistake has lain in regarding that inspiration as belonging to multitudes of other things *in the record* besides the essential revelation itself; and these having been proved fallible by being proved erroneous, such men as Mr. Macnaught have been driven to the rash theory of a "fallible inspiration," which soon ends in no miraculous inspiration at all.

Mr. Macnaught is not self-consistent in what he expressly says about the inspiration or non-inspiration of the writings *as writings*. At p. 116, he says:

"Do we believe the Bible to be inspired at all? Undoubtedly we do. We are firmly convinced that the *writers* of Holy Scripture were inspired, and that their writings are the reflex of their own inspired thoughts; and thus we most distinctly avow our belief in the inspiration of the Bible. But, as has been seen, we are assured that there is no connexion whatever between Infallibility and Inspiration."

This passage accurately represents the view which pervades his pages. With him the question is really dealt with as that of the inspiration of the *writers as writers*,—of the *Bible as a book;* and holding this affirmatively, he tones down inspiration into genius, and denies that it has any connection with infallibility of truth.

But in another place he has evidently a passing glimmer of the real distinction between the inspiration of the record and that of certain of the things recorded; which, had he followed it out, would have brought him into glorious light and truth. He lets it go again, however, as quite a subordinate thought to his favourite conception of inspiration as fallible. His words are:

"Not only does no sacred penman claim for his *writings* the character of Inspiration; but moreover the very idea of Inspiration, as it was held by the Old and New Testament writers, had not the slightest conception or even compatibility with infallibility. For instance, what could be more profanely absurd than to call the inspired Samson infallible?" &c.—P. 132.

This reminds us to allude to a not very graceful or gracious disclaimer on Mr. Macnaught's part (in the Preface to his Second Edition) of all obligation to the works of Unitarians. Truly it had been better for his book if he had been better acquainted with their thoughts! They would have led him to the important distinction which he has just touched and thrown down as useless,—the distinction between book inspiration and personal inspiration. They would have preserved him from the sacrifice he has made of the miraculous in revelation, and from the confusion of mind which blends Samson's strength, Milton's poetry and Bacon's logic, in one category with Christ's gospel! It is true, indeed, that Unitarians have not attempted the precise "severance between Inspiration and Infallibility" which he thinks he has effected. But they (and almost they alone) long since opposed the miserable and mischievous notion of verbal inspiration attaching to the writings as writings; they long since distinguished between the inspired things that constituted the essence of the Mosaic and of the Christian revelations, and the accompanying historical facts and thoughts of the contemporary world; they long since shewed how Moses might be uninspired, and therefore fallible in geology, astronomy, and even in religious or moral

ideas beyond the range of his mission, and yet the great truths of his mission be divinely sure; they scandalized the weak zealot by applying the same principles to the reasonings of Paul, and even to the words of Jesus Christ when expressive, for instance (as they naturally seem), of belief in the Jewish theory of demoniacal possession; and thus they placed Revelation on its true basis of reasonable conviction, and its Scriptures in their true light as the records of Inspiration.

Unitarians had done this long ago. Mr. Macnaught cannot undo it, but he is confusing it. For this reason we do not consider his book as any real contribution to progressive theology.

The latter pages of the book are employed in reconciling its opinions with the creeds of the Church of England and the position of a clergyman;—a manifestly painful attempt, which, like similar special-pleadings by other clergymen (whom some persons look at with admiration of their *liberality*), gives all true Churchmen the impression of disbelief in the formularies to which the author has sworn allegiance, and all true freemen the impression of insincere conformity. Where are the Lindseys among our self-styled liberal, Broad-church men?

LIFE AND TIMES OF TAULER.*

In this work Tauler is most admirably placed before English readers. The *mise en scène* is perfect. To begin with, the mechanical getting-up of the volume is beautiful. The paper, style of printing and illuminated decoration, in these days of "cheap and nasty" literature, are of themselves a delight to the reader, especially if his eyes are getting old. The original German is translated into racy, idiomatic English. The account of Tauler's life and times is excellent and elaborate, carefully drawn from the best sources; and Mr. Kingsley's Preface is written in his well-known and characteristic style of warm and appreciating eloquence. Our readers will think we are long in coming to the substance of the book. What of Tauler himself? We are obliged honestly to confess, *pace* Mr. Kingsley, that we find it very difficult, with every help and encouragement from translator or commentator, to get up any enthusiastic interest in the utterances of a *mystic*, even though he be the best and most intelligible of his class. The longer we live, the stronger becomes our predilection for simple, natural and healthful *truth*. The

* The History and Life of the Reverend Doctor John Tauler, of Strasbourg; with Twenty-five of his Sermons (Temp. 1340). Translated from the German, with Additional Notices of Tauler's Life and Times, by Susanna Winkworth; and a Preface by the Rev. Charles Kingsley. London—Smith, Elder and Co. 1857.

happiest and most useful men seem to us to be those who are engaged in the pursuit of some worthy object outside themselves, —the attainment of positive knowledge, the scientific investigation of external nature, the promotion of tangible and practical reforms, or the gratification of a poetical taste; some object, in the eager and delightful pursuit of which they are happily unconscious of themselves, not given to brood on the metaphysical subtleties attendant on the attempt to analyze self-consciousness and to solve the bewildering problem which a creature must ever be to itself. If, however, it be said that there are temperaments, moods and times, in which that problem will force itself upon man's attention, then we say, let us always be careful to mark well the boundaries between fact and fancy, between ascertained truths and visionary speculations. The better class of mystics are men whose personal influence we can well conceive to be stimulating and elevating to many minds, as giving unmistakeable signs of earnestness and purity of purpose. But when their words come to be soberly weighed, apart from the incommunicable charm of their living presence, they almost always leave upon our minds an impression of unsatisfactoriness, dreamy vagueness, arbitrary fancy and unreal assumption; something hovering on the fearful confines of sanity and insanity. If any of our readers pronounce us cold-hearted, prosaic, unappreciating, we beg to say that we are fond of *poetry*, when it is avowed to *be* poetry, the pictorial embodiment of the natural feelings of the human heart; but we feel impatient of fancies when set forth without any apparent power of discriminating them from facts. We will endeavour to give examples of what we mean from Tauler's own applications of Scripture. In the Sermon for Thursday in Easter week, from the beautiful and touching incident of the recognition of Jesus by Mary after his resurrection (John xx. 16), Tauler thus begins:

"Now mark, so long as Mary stood by the grave looking at the angels, Christ stood behind her, concealing Himself from her. For the Lord our God hideth Himself from those who are full of care about the creatures, and grieving over the loss of earthly things and creatures; but as soon as man turns from the creatures to find God, God reveals Himself unto the soul. Thus, when Mary turned to the grave of Christ, it was said unto her, 'Mary,' which name signifies a star of the sea, a queen of the world, and one who is illuminated by the Holy Spirit. He who desireth to see God, must be as a star in the firmament, severed from and spurning all the things of time, and illuminated to see all heavenly things."*

Now all this has nothing whatever to do with the affecting simplicity of the narrative. Whatever etymological origin or allegorical meaning be assigned to the name "Mary," the whole real significance of the appeal lay in the well-known and charac-

* Pp. 292, 293.

teristic tone of voice in which the name was uttered. Jesus called her "Mary," not because that "signifies a star of the sea," and so forth, but simply because her name was Mary, and the tender intonation of his voice revealed to her that it was indeed her Lord who spoke, and that he was indeed risen from the dead. Again, in the Sermon for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity, Tauler says, "We read in the Gospel of four sorts of measure that shall be given to a man,—a good measure, one shaken together, one pressed down, and one running over;" and thereupon devises four different sorts of measure of spiritual blessedness; whereas it is perfectly clear that the words on which he thus "enlarges," are nothing more than a picturesque amplification of the simple precept, "Give, and it shall be given unto you." Mr. Kingsley says, indeed, in his Preface,—

"Some, whose opinions will be entitled to the very highest respect, will be pained at the fantastic and arbitrary method (if method it can be called) in which Tauler uses Scripture to illustrate his opinions. Let them remember, that this was not a peculiarity of the man, but of his age; that for various reasons, a simple, literal, and historic method of interpretation (which doubtless is at the same time the most spiritual) was then in its infancy; that it is by no means perfect yet; and that it is quite possible that our great-grandchildren may be as much surprised at our use of many a text, as we are at Tauler's."*

But, however mistaken we may be in our applications of Scripture, we find it difficult to conceive that a man like Tauler could really believe that the Scriptures were meant to convey the interpretations which he attaches to them. Sometimes his application is more plausible and ingenious, as in his Sermon for the Second Sunday in Lent (Matt. xv. 21—28) on the touching interview with the Syrophœnician woman, beginning with the words, "Jesus went thence and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon." Tauler begins:

"Whence was it that He departed? From the Scribes and Pharisees. Now give heed to the principle herein contained: the Scribes were the wise men who prided themselves upon their knowledge; and the Pharisees were those who prided themselves upon their spirituality, and trusted in their religious practices and set tasks. These two classes of men are types of two of the most dangerous principles which can exist among religious people; and those who remain in their way of thinking are lost, for these two principles do ruin the soul like a worm at the root, so that men come to nothing. And yet there are few but what are in some measure under the influence of one or both of them, though some much more than others. By the Scribes we may understand men of a reasoning turn of mind, who try all things by the light of their reason, or as they appear to them through their senses. They receive ideas by means of their senses, and then exercise upon them their powers of reflection that they may attain to the comprehension of high questions. And they glory therein, and make very lofty discourses; but in the

* P. xxvii.

inward parts, where pure truth should gush forth from its fount, they are empty and dry, yielding nothing.

"The second class are the Pharisees. These are the religious people who look upon themselves as the excellent of the earth, and think highly of themselves, and take their stand upon prescribed customs and ways, and regard these usages as of more importance than anything else, and desire to be respected on this account and to have praise of men; but their hearts are full of judging thoughts of other men who do not observe or approve of their ways. From these our Lord went out."*

So far the application has some degree of plausibility, though certainly it never entered the head of the evangelist. The sentiments, however true or important, are entirely the product of Tauler's own mind; they are not contained or even hinted in the narrative which he makes his text. Further on, however, he proceeds:

"But whither did the Lord Jesus go? He went into the land of Tyre and Sidon. Now Tyre signifies a state of apprehension, and Sidon signifies the state of one driven by the hunters. Ah, children! few, alas! are willing to experience in themselves what it is to go thither; and yet it is a wondrously ennobling and profitable thing that these two trials should be laid upon a man together; and if under them he can act rightly and well, what nobleness, growth in grace, and good fruit, will be born of this sharp tribulation! Now what is this being hard pressed by the hunters? Nothing else but that the inward man would always fain be with God (who is his proper resting-place); and thus it ever drives the outward man towards and after God; but the outward man strives in the contrary direction, always going outwards after lower things, where indeed is his proper place; and thus there is a division in the man."†

On such a principle of interpretation, a preacher might illustrate anything by anything, and draw lessons of deepest wisdom from a child's fable or nursery-rhyme. Such an application of Scripture seems to us to have a most damaging tendency with all rational and thoughtful minds, in regard to the true significance and authority of scriptural truths. As a specimen of ingenious unreality in the doctrines of the mystics, we have the following from Eckart:

"He was, for instance, accused of teaching that Hell did not exist: his real teaching was that it consisted in the absence of God, as appears from the following passage: 'It is a question, what burns in hell? The Masters commonly say, Self-will. But I say of a truth that *Nought* burns in hell. Whereof mark this likeness. Were you to take a burning coal and lay it on my hand, if I were to say that the coal burnt my hand, I should do it a great injustice. Strictly speaking, what burns me is Nought; for the coal has something in it which my hand has not. See, it is that same *Not* which burns me. If my hand possessed all the essence and qualities of a coal, it would have altogether the nature of fire; and then, if you were to throw all the fire that ever burnt upon

* Pp. 266, 267. † Pp. 269, 270.

my hand, it would not give me pain. In like manner, I say, if God, and those who are in the light of His countenance, have aught of true blessedness which those have not who are separated from God, it is that same *Not* which tortures the souls that are in hell, more than any fire or than self-will.'"*

Having thus said our say on this head, we will now give our readers the pleasure of listening to Mr. Kingsley, in a passage the beauty and force of which we fully appreciate:

"It will be found that these 'mystics' are, in almost every case, persons who are suffering; perhaps disappointed, perhaps lonely, perhaps unhealthy, perhaps all three at once, bereaved of all social comfort, and tortured with disease.

"It is easy enough to say that such persons are especially liable to melancholic delusions, liable to mistake the action of their diseased nerves for external apparitions and voices; liable, from weakness of brain, and the too intense self-introspection which disease often brings with it, to invest trifling accidents with an undue importance, and to regard them as supernatural monitions. Be it so. Mystics in all ages have not been unaware of their own dangers, their own liability to mistakes; and have tried to distinguish, by such canons as their age afforded them, the false from the true, the fleshly from the spiritual. But meanwhile, has this hypothesis no moral justice, and therefore moral probability (which must always depend on the amount of moral justice involved in any given hypothesis),—namely, the hypothesis that to these lonely sufferers more was granted than to the many, because they needed more? That some direct and inward 'beatific vision' of God was allowed to them, because they had no opportunity of gaining any indirect and outward one from a smiling world, seen in the light of a joyful heart? There are those who have health and strength, health and beauty, wife and child; a past which it is pleasant to remember, and a future which it is pleasant to work out. Such find no difficulty in saying that God is Love; that God cares for them, and His mercy is over all His works. But if they had lain, and lain perhaps from childhood, in the lowest deep, in the place of darkness, and of storm, while lover and friend were hid away from them, and they sat upon the parching rock, like Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, beside the corpses of their dead sons, dead hopes, dead health, dead love, as on a ghastly battle-field, stript among the dead, like those who are wounded, and cut away from God's hand; if they had struggled in the horrible mire of perplexity, and felt all God's billows and waves go over them, till they grew weary of crying, and their throats were dry, and their sight failed them with watching so long for their God, and all the faith and prayer which was left them was: 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither suffer Thy holy one to see corruption'—if all this, or less than this, had come upon them, then they might have felt it not altogether so easy to say that God is Love. They, too, might have longed for some inward proof, some token which transcends all argument, that though they go down to hell, God is there; that in their most utter doubt and darkness and desolation, all is well; for they dwell in God, and God in them. They might have longed for it; and God might

* Pp. 81, 82, note.

have been just and merciful in giving it to them; as He may have been in giving it already to thousands, who by no other means could have been able to face the fearful storm of circumstances, which seemed to proclaim the Devil, and not God, the master of the world. Why not let the mystics tell their own story? It is more philosophical after all, perhaps, as well as more Scriptural, to believe that 'wisdom is justified of all her children.'"*

Prefixed to the Sermons is Tauler's anonymous account of his own "conversion," or rather self-revelation, under the influence of Nicolas of Basle. With reference to this event we cannot forbear presenting to our readers at full length the following thoughtful and profound remarks in the translator's account of Tauler's Life and Times.

"It seems that, with all his sincere piety, and hatred of sin, and abhorrence of the evil world around him, Tauler had never come to a clear consciousness of all the depths of sin concealed in his own heart, or an apprehension of the full import of the utter self-surrender to God which he preached. Such a deficiency of self-knowledge is indeed more possible with a conscientious man of Tauler's character, pure and gentle by nature, than with one of the opposite, or more stormy type. It is true that the task which God lays upon all is the same—the unceasing surrender of their own wishes to the higher aims which He sets successively before them. But with men of passionate temperament and selfish habits, who are therefore at every turn exposed by circumstances to violent temptation, their natural wishes are, for the most part, so obviously sinful, that though the struggle of renouncing them may be hard, the duty of doing so is clear and pressing. And when such turn to God, their falls in attempting the Christian walk are often frequent enough, or at least their battles with temptation severe enough, to teach them the evil and weakness of their own heart. With men, on the other hand, of calm, pure, and affectionate disposition, and trained in conscientious habits, so many of their wishes are for things harmless, or even good in themselves, that it is less easy to see why and how they are to be given up. Such men, just, kindly, and finding much of their own happiness in that of others, live, for the most part, in harmonious relations with those around them, and have little to disturb their consciences, beyond the fear of falling short in the path of duty on which they have already entered. But they are exposed to many perils, more insidious, because less startling, than those which beset their more fiercely tempted brethren. They are in danger of depending too much on the respect and love which others so readily yield them; of valuing themselves on a purity, which, if ever one of struggle, has come to be one of taste; of mistaking the pleasure they feel in the performance of duty, for real submission to the will of God; and above all, of shrinking from new truths which would, for the time, confuse their belief, and break up the calm symmetry of their lives. The greater danger to the Christian life arising from those hidden heart-sins, than even from sinful acts which instantly wound the conscience, is a truth which Tauler insists upon in his sermons so strongly and so often—nay, sometimes almost to exaggeration, that one could not but guess that he was speak-

* Pp. xxxiii—xxxv.

ing from his own experience, even had we not the certainty of it from the 'History.' For, as he often declares, different natures require and receive a very different discipline from God. Sometimes it is by outward affliction that God speaks to souls thus sinking into the lethargy of formalism; and the loss of friends, or health, or influence, suddenly seems to cut off, as it were, half their means of serving Him, and to rouse long-forgotten temptations to rise up against His will. Sometimes, on the other hand, He speaks to them inwardly, by opening their eyes to heights of holiness, which they had never before steadily contemplated. They now suddenly perceive that many of the fancied duties which have till now occupied their lives, and satisfied their consciences, have long ceased to be duties, and have come to be mere habits or pleasures; and that while they have been thus living in self-love, unseen and unrepented of, they might have been coming to the knowledge of the higher obligations to which they must have been so blind, but which were all implied in their first belief, if they had but continued to read it with a single eye. Thus they are weighed down by present temptations to which they have long been strangers. For, in order to follow the new light granted to them, they must give up long-cherished aims; relinquish many opportunities of doing good, and even, it may seem, the very faculties for using them; and sacrifice, not only the good opinion of the world, but the trust and affection of many who are dearest to them. They shrink from such renunciation; and then come doubt and perplexity to add to the bitterness of the struggle. Can it be right to abandon so much that is good and worthy in itself, can it be the voice of God that summons them to do this, or is it not rather a self-willed fancy of their own? No: for conscience cannot be mistaken when it tells us of sin, though it is insufficient to reveal to us duty—and this fierce clinging to their own wishes, what is it but the same obstinate resistance to the will of God, which they have been accustomed to blame—nay, even wonder at, in the vicious and criminal, whom they have perhaps been seeking to reclaim? Such a struggle, it seems, was that which Tauler had to pass through before he could fully apprehend or be fitted for the work which God had for him to do. And surely, without some such struggle, none can keep long in the right path. For the path to life does not stretch across the levels of habit, but winds up the heights of aspiration, and at every fresh step in the ascent a wider horizon of duty opens to the view."*

The humility with which Tauler submitted himself to the rebukes and direction of Nicolas is very striking; but we cannot see much wisdom or appropriateness in the "Golden A, B, C," set him as a task to learn by heart. It reminds us at once of "A was an Archer," &c., and we can only imagine that the lesson was set to make Tauler humble himself "as a little child;" for the exercise was certainly childish enough.

Having spoken in a critical spirit of the allegorical applications of Scripture in which Tauler indulged himself, we must not omit to point out the testimony thus virtually borne by him to the important principle, that there is an inherent power in the human soul of recognizing and responding to divine truth. Whatever

* Pp. 114–117.

deep and solemn conviction of duty is awakened, by whatever means, in the soul, is itself a revelation from God. When Tauler professed to be drawing profound lessons of spiritual wisdom from passages of Scripture, in themselves irrelevant or insignificant, he was really attesting the constancy and trustworthiness of that inner light which is capable of being kindled in the soul of every man that cometh into the world. Nor must we omit to say that the Sermons in this volume abound with wise, holy and forcible sentiments, true to the spiritual experience of every thoughtful and conscientious man, though occasionally, in our opinion, extravagant and morbid. Considering, too, the age in which Tauler lived, the excessive reliance placed on the mere mechanical forms of the Romish Church, his preaching must have had a most wholesome and awakening influence. It is excellently observed by the Translator:

"His preaching is distinguished from that of most of his brethren among the 'Friends of God,'* by its more searching application of religious principles to the moral questions arising in the various emergencies of inward experience and outward life. How much more widely still must it have differed from that of the ordinary preachers, who sought to captivate the educated by the refinements of scholastic logic, employed on questions of no use but to display their own ingenuity, or to entertain the vulgar by marvellous stories of wonder-working saints or demons,—when in simple earnest language he appealed to the consciences of his hearers, and then showed them the way of escape from the wretchedness of their sinful lives to the peace of God, which passeth all understanding. And when he taught them that they must forsake the creature and cleave to God alone, it was no selfish shutting up of the heart within the narrow sphere of its own emotions and experiences which he preached, for he is continually admonishing to works of love, and ever places human duties on their true level, measuring their value not by the nature of the act, but by the obedience and love involved in its performance. 'One can spin,' he says, 'another can make shoes; and all these are gifts of the Holy Ghost. I tell you, if I were not a priest, I would esteem it a great gift that I was able to make shoes, and would try to make them so well as to be a pattern to all.' 'The measure with which we shall be measured, is the faculty of love in the soul,—the will of a man; by this shall all his words and works and life be measured.'

"But that which seems to me the most striking characteristic of Tauler's sermons is his profound sympathy with the spirit of Christ's life, especially with his infinite sorrow over the sins of others. This is, indeed, a characteristic of the 'Friends of God' in general, but is expressed with greater force and beauty in Tauler than in the other writers of the same school. In this sense they specially deserve the title which they assumed; for, more than any other class of religious writers with whom I am acquainted, do they seem to have entered into that intense appreciation of the evil of sin, mingled with endless grief and compassion for its slaves, which could overwhelm the Saviour's mind with agony." †

* The name assumed by an association of spiritual mystics previously described.

† Pp. 118—120.

We will now give some extracts from the Sermons with the view of bearing out this high but deserved commendation. In his Sermon for Epiphany, though there the subject, as is frequently the case, has little real connection with the text (Matt. ii. 11—"And they presented unto him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh"), the following is beautifully said in reference to the appointed bitterness (myrrh) of life:

"All the myrrhs of bitterness that God gives, are ordered aright, that He may by this means raise men to true greatness. It is for the wholesome exercise of suffering that He has set the forces of nature as it were at war with man. He could just as well and as easily have caused bread to grow as corn, but that it is necessary for man to have his powers exercised in every way. And He has bestowed as much care and thought in the arrangement of each single thing, as the artist does when he is painting a picture, who never draws a single stroke with his pencil without considering how long, how short, and how broad, it ought to be; and it must be so and no otherwise, if the picture is to be a perfect master-piece, and all its bright red and blue colours are to come out. But God takes a thousand times more pains with us than the artist with his picture, by many touches of sorrow, and by many colours of circumstance, to bring man into the form which is the highest and noblest in His sight, if only we received His gifts and myrrh in the right spirit.

"There are some, however, who are not content with the myrrh that God gives them, but think fit to give themselves some, and create evils for themselves and sick fancies, and have indeed suffered long and much, for they take hold of all things by the wrong end. And they gain little grace from all their pain, because they are building upon stones of their own laying, whether it be penance or abstinence, or prayer or meditation. According to them, God must wait their leisure, and let them do their part first, else no good will come of the work. God hath fixed it in His purpose that He will reward nothing but His own works. In the kingdom of Heaven He will crown nothing to all eternity but His works, and not thine. What He has not wrought in thee, He takes no account of.

"In the third place, there is an exceeding bitter myrrh which God gives; namely, inward assaults and inward darkness. When a man is willing to taste this myrrh, and does not put it from him, it wears down flesh and blood—yea, the whole nature; for these inward exercises make the cheek grow pale far sooner than great outward hardships; for God appoints unto his servants cruel fightings and strange dread, and unheard-of distresses, which none can understand but he who has felt them. And these men are beset with such a variety of difficulties, so many cups of bitterness are presented to them, that they hardly know which way to turn, or what they ought to do; but God knows right well what He is about. But when the cup is put away, and these feelings are stifled or unheeded, a greater injury is done to the soul than can ever be amended. For no heart can conceive in what surpassing love God giveth us this myrrh; yet this which we ought to receive to our soul's good, we suffer to pass by us in our sleep with indifference, and nothing comes of it. Then we come and complain: 'Alas, Lord! I am so dry, and it is so dark within me!' I tell you, dear child, open thy

heart to the pain, and it will do thee more good than if thou wert full of feeling and devoutness.

"Now men receive this bitter myrrh in two ways; they try to meet it as with their practical sense or with their intellectual subtilty. When it springs from outward circumstances, men wish they had known better, and they would have averted it with their wisdom, and attribute it to outward accidents, to fate, or misfortune, and think they might have taken steps to prevent what has happened, and if they had done so, the means would have succeeded, and the calamity would have been turned aside. They would fain be too wise for God, and teach Him, and master Him, and cannot take things from His hand. The sufferings of such are very sore, and their myrrh is exceeding bitter.

"There are others, who having tasted the cup of that bitterness which springs from within, do start back and forthwith seek to break away from it by the exercise of their natural wit and subtilty, and think to quell the strife by dint of reasoning and arguing with themselves. And this kind of trouble often passes away more quickly with simple minds than with those whose reason is more active; for the former follow God more simply, they feel they do not know what to do, and so they trust. But if those of higher powers follow God's leading, and surrender themselves wholly to Him, their career is far nobler and more blessed, for their reason serves them in all things more freely and excellently."*

A high and refined standard of duty to God is set forth in the following passage, which contains a lesson greatly needed by the worldly, self-indulgent and undisciplined:

"And here I wish to rebuke all those religious persons who are leaning on their good works, and as it were keep a right of property in them, thinking themselves free to do or not to do them. For whenever they see or imagine any new undertaking or religious practice which can afford them inward or outward satisfaction, they give themselves to it with prayer, and striving, and weeping, and watching. And as long as they find pleasure in it, they cannot have enough of it; but if this sense of pleasure and interest passes away, their devotion passes away likewise, and they come to dislike their good and holy work, and then they grow lukewarm and careless, performing all they do without devotion. All this is owing to their not having had a single eye to God's glory. They having been prompted and sustained in their labour by the pleasure it has yielded them, and now this has fled. For we must not seek enjoyment and sweetness in the gifts of God, either in holy exercises, or in words or works; but we must take delight in God alone, and not in His gifts. * * * For I tell thee by that Truth, which is God Himself, if thou art ever to become a man after the will of God, every thing must die in thee to which thou art cleaving, whether it be God's gifts, or the saints, or the angels, or even all that would afford thee consolation for thy spiritual wants: all must be given up. If God is to shine in on thy soul brightly, without a cloud, and accomplish His noble and glorious will in thee, thou must be free and unencumbered by all that affords thee comfort out of God.

"We are not, therefore, forbidden to honour the blessed saints, but only to claim any property in their merits for the sake of our own delight

* Pp. 214—216.

in them; for I tell thee, that if thou hadst all manner of heavenly grace from God, and didst possess the good works of all mankind, so soon as thou shouldst claim it as thine own, for the sake of thine own delight therein, that moment all this goodness would be sullied and defaced with thine own evil. For a true and faithful servant of God shall be always pressing upward to what is before him, not suffering himself to be held back by comfort or pleasure, joy or sorrow, wealth or poverty. Through all this he shall urge onward, till he come unto the infinite ocean of the Godhead. And therein he shall be lost without his own knowledge, and dazzled by excess of light and love. There it shall be given him to know all that belongs to true perfection.

"A good and devout man shall be like the labourer in the vineyard, who works all the day long, and nevertheless he must take food. But the labour is long and the meal barely lasts an hour, and he only takes it for the sake of the work. * * * So is it with a noble-minded man. When he feels an inclination in himself to enjoy God or His heavenly grace and what is thereof, let him for a little while seek and purpose his own good, but not longer than is needful for the nourishing of his soul, that he may consume his spiritual strength again in labour; and when it has thus been spent in the noblest of all ways, from a love flowing back unto God who has inspired it, then the man must go for refreshment again into the river of life that floweth out from the throne of God, that it may again bring forth in him the fruit of good works."*

In the same sermon, founded on the parable of the householder who hired labourers into his vineyard (Matt. xx. 1), godly men are compared to "the wood of the vine, outwardly hard and black and dry," but concealing in its veins "the noblest of all juices." The work of pruning is also allegorized, the necessity of "lopping off the wild shoots," and the mischief of unskilful pruning, cutting off the good shoots and leaving the bad.

"So it is with those who do not understand this spiritual art; they leave the roots of vice and evil dispositions alive in the heart, and hew and lop at poor nature, and thereby destroy this noble vineyard. Nature is in itself good and noble; why shouldst thou hew away aught that belongs to it? For I tell thee that when the time is come for it to yield fruit in a godly, blessed, devout life, then it will be seen that thou hast spoiled thy nature."

The rest of the vine-dresser's work—the bending down the upper branches, fastening the vine to a strong framework, digging about the stem, rooting out the weeds, opening the soil to the influence of the divine sun, and so forth—is all minutely and elaborately spiritualized in the same apt and ingenious, and here not inappropriate manner.

The following passage is remarkable as indicating that God is nearer and more merciful to us than any of his creatures, or even than Christ himself. Tauler is relating the case of a distressed young maiden in illustration of the Syrophœnician woman before mentioned.

* Pp. 245—248.

"Now in this unspeakable distress she turned to our Lady and all the saints, and besought them all that they would intercede for her. But then she saw that the blessed saints were so utterly lost in the contemplation of God that none of them for a moment listened to her cries and appeals. In their overwhelming bliss and joy they never even heard her voice. Then she turned after a human fashion to the sacred sorrow and bitter death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and it was answered her, why should she appeal to that to which she had never shown due honour and reverence? But when she saw that neither our Lady, nor the saints, nor the sufferings of our Lord brought her help, she turned herself with all earnestness to God, and said: 'Ah, Lord! since none wilt come to my help, behold, O beloved Lord, that I am Thy poor creature, and Thou art my God; I fall down before Thy righteous sentence, according to Thy most blessed will; and whether Thou wilt have me to remain for ever in this horrible, hellish torment, I leave, dear Lord, altogether to Thy most blessed will.' But when she had thus utterly surrendered herself to God for all eternity, that moment she was lifted up far away beyond all intervening things, and wafted into the abyss of God's love."*

The following passage would seem to indicate that Tauler did not preach to the poor so much as to those who were "fruges consumere nati."

"Now, we find some men whose love is like a very broad vessel; that is, they can meditate a great deal upon our Lord, and with great desire and fervour, but they are hardly two inches deep. That is to say, they lack humility and a common godlike love toward all mankind. For, as St. Augustine says, 'Salvation does not depend on the length of time that a person has been converted to God, nor on the number of good deeds performed, but solely on the greatness of his love.' This we see in the example of the husbandmen who, with great labour, till the wheatfields and precious vineyards, yet partake not themselves of those best fruits of the earth, but have only rye to eat and water to drink. So it is with many persons, in a spiritual sense, with regard to the outward good works which they do, that other more noble-minded and devout persons reap the fruit and benefit thereof."†

There is excellent and homely good sense in the following passage from a sermon on Diligence in performing all appointed work.

"Whence comes it then, that we have so many complaints, each saying that his occupation is a hindrance to him, while notwithstanding his work is of God, who hindereth no man? Whence comes this inward reproof and sense of guilt which torment and disquiet you? Dear children, know that it is not your work which gives you this disquiet. No: it is your want of order in fulfilling your work. If you performed your work in the right method, with a sole aim to God, and not to yourselves, your own likes and dislikes, and neither feared nor loved aught but God, nor sought your own gain or pleasure, but only God's glory, in your work, it would be impossible that it should grieve your conscience. It is a shame for a spiritual man, if he have not done his work properly, but so imperfectly that he has to be rebuked for it. For this

* Pp. 275, 276. † P. 347.

is a sure sign that his works are not done in God, with a view to His glory and the good of his neighbour. You may know and be known by this, whether your works are directed to God alone, and whether you are in peace or not. Our Lord did not rebuke Martha on account of her works, for they were holy and good; He reproved her on account of her anxiety. A man ought to busy himself in good and useful occupations of whatever kind they may be, casting his care upon God, and labour silently and watchfully, keeping a rein upon himself, and proving himself, so as to sift what it is that urges and impels him in his work. Further, he must look within, and mark whether the Holy Spirit will have him to be active or quiet; that he may obey His godly leadings in each instance, and do and have undone by the influence of the Holy Spirit; now resting, now working, but ever fulfilling his due task in peace.

"And wherever you see the aged, the sick, the helpless, you should run to their assistance, and strive with each other in fulfilling works of love—each helping the other to bear his burden. If thou dost not so, be sure that God will take thy work from thee, and give it to another who will do it aright, and will leave thee empty and bare at once of gifts and of merit.

"If, when at thy work, thou feel thy spirit stirred within thee, receive it with solemn joy, and thus learn to do thy work in God, instead of straightway fleeing from thy task. Thus should ye learn to exercise yourselves in virtue; for ye must be exercised if ye are to come to God. Do not expect that God will pour virtue into you without your own effort."*

There is much truth and wisdom in the sermon on the text (strictly appropriate for once), "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life"—2 Cor. iii. 6.

"— there are some who endeavour to get rid of the burden of sin by asking counsel and hearing preachers, hoping to hear somewhat that may afford them a stay, and thus they may find deliverance. Behold, dear friend, if thou spend all thy years in running from church to church, thou must look for and receive help from within, or thou wilt never come to any good; however thou mayest seek and inquire, thou must also be willing to be tormented without succour from the outward help of any creature. I tell you, children, that the very holiest man I ever saw in outward conduct and inward life, had never heard more than five sermons in all his days. When he saw and perceived how the matter stood, he thought that was enough, and set to work to die to that to which he ought to die, and live to that to which he ought to live. Let the common people run about and hear all they can, that they may not fall into despair or unbelief; but know that all who would be God's, inwardly and outwardly, turn to themselves, and retire within. And know that if ever you desire to be spiritual and blessed men, you must cease from running outwards for help, and turn within; for you will never get what you want by a multitude of words, hear as many as you will; but only by loving and serving God from the bottom of your heart, and your neighbour as yourself, and leaving all things to stand on their own foundation. But pant after God with all your heart, as the holy patriarchs did, and covet that which you truly ought to

* Pp. 355—357.

covet, and leave all things, whether concerning yourself or any other creatures, to God's most blessed will."*

The conclusion of the sermon on Matt. vi. 33 is just and forcible, and with this we must conclude our extracts:

"Now St. Paul tells us, however, that we must be careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Children, that peace which is found in the spirit and the inner life is well worth our care, for in that peace lies the satisfaction of all our wants. In it the Kingdom of God is discovered and His righteousness is found. This peace a man should allow nothing to take from him, whatever betide, come weal or woe, honour or shame. But ever keep thy inward man in the bond of peace, which consists in the common love of all to all; and set before you the lovely example of our Lord Jesus Christ, and see how His love wrought, leading Him to endure greater sufferings than all the saints or all mankind ever endured. For He was all His life more utterly destitute of consolation than any man ever was, and ended it by the bitterest death that man ever died; and yet in His highest powers He was never less blessed than He is at this moment. Now those who are most truly followers of Him in emptiness of outward consolation, and in true poverty, inward and outward, having no refuge or stay, and in no wise clinging to the creature, or seeking themselves, these come to discover, in the truest and noblest sort, the Kingdom of God. And this is God's righteousness, that He will give us to find His Kingdom by treading in Christ's footsteps, in true self-surrender and willing poorness of spirit. That we may all so seek the Kingdom of God as truly to find it, may He help us. Amen."†

We had marked other passages for extracting, including one on the griefs and joys of Christ's life, characteristic both of the excellences and of the defects of Tauler's style, mingling much thoughtful truth with some straining after allegorical completeness. But we have already presented our readers with amply sufficient samples from the volume under our notice, to convince them, we think, that it is likely to prove a valuable and appropriate addition to the family library, as a domestic source of wholesome and awakening spiritual influence.

The perusal of the volume suggests the thought how all really good preaching transcends the boundaries of age and church. This earnest preacher of the Catholic Church five centuries ago speaks eloquently to the conscience and to the sympathies of Unitarian heretics at the present day. Such a fact tempts us to wish that all sectarian distinctions could be obliterated and forgotten. Perhaps, however, the existence of such divisions, though it may have the prejudicial effect of attaching undue importance to technical questions, serves to supply the needed correction to every extreme of thought in turn, so that in this manner all churches may be working together in unconscious harmony towards the fuller manifestation of Him whose name is One.

* Pp. 363, 364. † Pp. 381, 382.

A MINISTER'S RETROSPECT.

Chapter IV.

MY FIRST SERMON AND MY FIRST LOVE.

In the summer vacation between my two sessions at York College, I made my first pulpit adventure, with the kind sanction of uncle Peter and in his chapel.

He wanted (or pretended to want) two Sundays' absence for a journey during his school vacation; and would be very much obliged to me, he said, with the grave politeness of one minister speaking to another, if I would be so good as to occupy his pulpit, and also hold myself ready for any occasional duty that might arise in his absence. O dear uncle Peter! thou wast one of a race of true gentlemen,—a little formal perhaps,—but altogether true-born in Nature's nobility, and born again in Christian grace!

Of course I promised to do my best, though it was with fear and trembling I made the promise. I felt at the same time not a little flattered by the request; for I knew that uncle Peter had too high a sense of the dignity of his calling in general, and of his own pulpit in particular, to have asked any one to occupy his place who he feared might in any way disgrace it. I was naturally timid and self-distrustful; and I believe I had more self-consciousness, if not vanity (for they are nearly the same), than was good for me. It has been rubbed pretty roughly a good many times since (whether rubbed off or no), and that is the way I have become aware of its early prevalence. Certainly, I felt at once pleased with my uncle's proposal, and very anxious as to the result.

Turning over my papers many years afterwards with a view to reduce their fearful bulk, and so rummaging to the very bottom of my *sanctum sanctorum* in search of victims for the flames, I fell upon some sermons which I did not know whether to call very old ones or very young ones. For they were, in fact, some of the first, if not the very first, that I had ever written,—and, alas! preached too. Among them were the identical four that had done duty for uncle Peter. Very young things indeed they were, in themselves considered; but old even then, according to date—yea, obsolete, I might say. The very paper on which they were written was yellow with time (not soiled by frequent use, however, I am proud to add); and when held up to the light, it proved to be quite a different sort of article from what had been made in the interim,—to say nothing of the *water-mark*, (now a thing unknown), dating it 1805. They were written, I find, and preached in 1806. Since that time they had never done service (or damage rather, the author's reputation, at least, being considered), but had reposed in perfect security at the very

bottom of the accumulated treasures of thirty years. This consideration restrained my first impulse on their discovery, which was to burn them. "But what harm do they do there?" a sentimental memory remonstrated. "Why massacre the innocents? You can never reproduce a first sermon, whatever greater things you may do. And you are sure not to be such a fool as to preach them again, though you have now found the dear little things. You may amuse your manly mind with laughing at their juvenility, and then put them by again. It may even gratify a natural feeling to turn them over yet again some day when you are an old man, and see what you think then of your former self and his productions." So, after a hasty glance at a few pages, I put them by again for some more convenient but indefinite season; which has only now arrived to tempt a closer investigation of their contents.

The first time a young minister preaches must be, to himself at least, if he has in him the heart of a true aspirant to the ministry of Christ, an intensely interesting and probably a nervous and anxious occasion. It was so indeed with me. O, I shall never forget it! I had desired it and longed for it; and now that it was come, I trembled before it. I hailed it with deep earnestness, and prepared for it with all possible assiduity.

My uncle's chapel was, on the whole, very suitable for such a first experiment; for while some few of his people were well-educated, yet kind and considerate, the majority were plain simple folks. I furbished up a recently written college exercise on the divine origin of Christianity, and wrote three new practical discourses, for this fortnight's campaign. The former was a complete answer to Gibbon's insinuations against Christianity, and incidentally to several other deistical writers also. The other three together formed a complete body of practical divinity, with a considerable amount of biblical criticism and exposition (*exegesis*, I suppose I ought to say, if I wish to keep up with the present age), illustrating the text and its context and all parallel or collateral passages with a considerable amount of scriptural antiquities, natural history, &c. &c. I must say, on reading them painfully over again as I now have done, that they were most decidedly scriptural discourses at any rate, not aiming at being thought flights of genius or specimens of rhetoric, but the sincerest possible efforts to lay down morals demonstratively and place Scripture beyond cavil. To other persons, I may, not improbably, have appeared something of a theological prig; but it was indeed in the profoundest love of the sacred volume, and with an earnest confidence in the accordance of Revelation with right Reason and Philosophy, that I ventured my first essays for scriptural truth and righteousness. I hope and trust I have, in maturer years, illustrated and defended the holy gospel from a larger point of view and with proportionately increased power;

but never with greater earnestness of conviction or freshness and depth of feeling than in those juvenile sermons in uncle Peter's chapel.

I do not mean, however, to inflict even an extract upon my readers; for an extract would no more serve to shew their character than the simpleton's brick could serve as a sample of his house. The *completeness* of one of them as a condensed summary of the Evidences of Christianity, of another as an abstract of all Christian doctrine, of a third as a system of Christian morals, and the fourth as something else equally systematic and valuable, was the characteristic thing in these juvenile productions. I have never since written a sermon or lecture that covered half the ground taken by any one of these. It was a valuable piece of experience, not lost upon me, to find that I had quite *written myself out* by these four discourses. I remember, too, an incident of perhaps equal practical import, that occurred on one of those Sundays. My subject was the parable of the Unforgiving Debtor (in connection with which I, of course, exhausted the general subject of teaching by parables, before expounding this particular parable). After service, an intelligent lady asked me, whether I thought it was *just* on the part of the lord in the parable to re-demand the debt which he had once forgiven. Whatever the subsequent misconduct of the forgiven servant might be, she said, the old debt was forgiven just the same; and the lord had no right whatever to claim it again. I believe my criticism had not gone so deep as this; and I felt somewhat shocked at her boldness in canvassing a sacred parable so keenly. But I was too diffident to tell her so. I replied that I thought it was quite in keeping with the rough justice of an absolute master like him in the parable, whose generous kindness to a slave had been so abused. But she pressed me still with the application made of the parable by Christ: "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses;" and insisted that the Almighty was not such a master, and could not (as here represented) be so unjust as to revoke forgiveness after He had passed it. I now felt that she was far too dry and critical; but I also felt my own incompetence to be a teacher of full-grown people like her. And so the two Sundays of teaching made me the more ready to go back to York as a learner. And this was a very satisfactory result in the long run.

On the second Sunday, I had no sooner given out the first hymn than, greatly to my discomfiture (as may well be imagined), I spied uncle Peter crouching in a remote and obscure pew, and vainly trying to hide his stately form. I felt as if I was shot; my knees shook under me; and my first impulse was to leave the pulpit, walk through the chapel, and request him to take his own place. But this would have been a still more nervous thing

than preaching before him. So I stayed where I was; and, though awfully frightened, resolved to make the best of it. I suspected, too (what proved to be the fact), that my good uncle had practised a pious fraud upon me, and had come back, late on Saturday night, on purpose to hear his promising nephew with his own ears. So I went through the service pretty firmly (my shaking knees were luckily invisible to him and the congregation); and when the service was over I received his calm but hearty word of encouragement. This was indeed sweet to me; and coming from so competent while so kind a judge, and being joined with a few most kind and wise suggestions for the cure of an awkward trick or two, it made altogether as satisfactory a conclusion as I could have expected or desired for my great experiment. He laughingly said he would put some pins in the cushion the next time I preached, to prevent my lolling upon it (my occasional posture of mock ease and real *mauvaise honte* that day); and then he gravely told me, while praising my clear articulation, that I was too slow in my delivery for a young man; "for (said he) you are sure to grow slower if you grow old."

During this vacation, as in one or two of my earlier Glasgow ones, I visited uncle Peter's old fellow-student and neighbour, the minister of B——, in the next county, and felt a strange delight in the sunny face and brisk, cheerful companionship of his daughter Mary. She was six months older than I, and (I have no doubt) felt herself several years older; for I was sheepish and awkward, and at best bookish; while she had all the graceful ease of one of Nature's own gentlewomen, was well educated, and not unaccustomed to the usages of polite society. We walked, talked and read together; and little thought she what a tumult she was exciting in my imagination and feelings. I never presumed, indeed, to think that I was in love with her; still less to fancy that she could ever be so with me. Nothing of the kind. I could not so have flattered myself for a moment. A mere lad at College, with all his work yet to do, and his position in life to earn,—a humble one in all probability, when earned; for him to think of falling in love! Absurd to imagine such a thing! Some lads, I suppose, have done so, or have imagined it; but such an idea could never have assumed palpable shape in my mind as requiring sentence of encouragement or dismissal. It was as though I "should love some bright particular star, and woo it." Mary shone far above me in her brightness and gaiety, and I admired;—no more. I had visited her excellent father one vacation after another; and was always charmed with the companionship which he, a man of more than forty, so freely gave me, a stripling of twenty, as if on equal terms, discussing Homer and Euripides, or criticising the Greek Testament with me, comparing his skill in joinery and mechanics with mine, and initiating me into some of the mysteries of amateur farming; which last, judging by his

merry account of his own continual loss of money and gain of health, energy and good spirits, presented a very complicated balance of profit and loss. What a cheerful, light-hearted man he was! It was breathing health to be with him. I felt it a great privilege to have such a friend, and nothing was necessary beyond his society to account for the pleasure I felt in the hospitable home of this country minister. On all these occasions Mary shone above me still, associating so simply and gaily with me and everybody, as to make it quite plain that I never could, if I desired and tried, be anything but a pleasant friend of her father's and her own. At last it was all plain to me, and my own feelings became more plain to myself than before, when one day her father said gaily to me, "I wonder whether you have heard that our Polly is engaged to be married?" No; I had not indeed; but I hoped and trusted it would be for her happiness, for she was indeed an excellent and delightful young woman. It choked me to say so much; but I believe her father, quite satisfied (as he had every reason to be) with his prospective son-in-law, and thinking of me just as Mary did, never dreamed that he had touched a sensitive place in my foolish heart. I did not offer Polly my congratulations personally; that was too hazardous to attempt; but I shortened my visit, and did not go again till after her marriage. I was truly glad to learn that she was happy in marriage, and was too soon shocked at her early death. Was this, on my part, "a first attachment"? I could have romanced about it, had I possessed the talent for the sentimental novel. But, seriously, I never regarded it as deserving so exclusive and special a name. A young man may have many such experiences, and be interested and benefited by them all, yet not truly love (to say nothing of being loved) in any. A young woman of intellectual cultivation and pure feeling never imagines the possibility of such a thing as painfully fascinating one younger than herself. She looks up, not down, because she herself stands high already. And if she has already placed her own heart in worthy and faithful keeping, all the more easy, graceful and interesting is likely to be her intercourse with her friends at large. I have often since observed this. An interesting young woman becomes infinitely more so from the time she is engaged in marriage. She has thenceforth an ease in general society and a freedom in conversation which she had not before. If we before admired her for her somewhat coy reserve, we are charmed now that she may throw it away. Under such circumstances it was that I made my first observation of young womanhood beyond the society of my own sisters. And it deepened my feeling of respectful regard towards your sex, my daughter, into a reverence which I have never lost, and made me more and more strongly feel that love and marriage are among life's highest sanctities, to be striven for and won by inward desert.

"My dear papa, you must tell me one thing. Had this early acquaintance of yours with this charming Mary anything to do with your giving me that name?"

Ask me, rather, dearest, whether your own mother's name ever excited a feeling which she or I would not have desired in remembrance of that "other Mary" of younger days. Or ask whether the little that there is in a name made your blessed mother's just so far dearer to me. It is *her* name, at any rate, that you perpetuate to me, my darling; but I love the name for itself too, in spite of its being the very commonest of all names. As Charles Lamb says, in his pleasant verses on female names, "In Christian world, Mary the garland wears." And wear thou the garland with the name, my dear daughter! There were three Maries in the gospel, all dear to Christ, but with no rival or clashing interests. There have been three very dear to me; but the name is all thine own now, my daughter, for the sake of thy mother in heaven.

Yes; that was really my first love, and has been my life's love. I am not going to write down that part of my history. My daughter has often heard me tell how happy those few brief years were; and it concerns not the public nor the church to hear of them. When, not long after her death, I met with the following passages in an old writer of the sixteenth century, I understood that he too had known a happy marriage. Cornelius Agrippa was a physician of the period of the Reformation. In his treatise *De Sacramento Matrimonii*, he says:

"Man, since he is of all animals the most sociable, then only fulfils truly and rightly the duties of human nature, puts confidence into his life, and safety in the course of it, when he has entered into the stable and indissoluble contract of marriage..... For what association between human beings can be more sacred and pleasant; what safer, more secure? what chaster than that between husband and wife?—when one is as the other; two bodies are conformed to one mind and a single will. Only they who are wedded envy not each other, only they know the infinitude of love, when each depends entirely on the other, and reposes on the other; when they are one flesh, one mind, in one concord; having the same sorrow, the same joy; when the worldly increase of the one is the increase of other, they being alike in wealth, alike in poverty, resting in one bed, refreshed at one table, companions night and day, not quitting each other for sleep or for watchings; conjoined through life in the same actions, labours, perils, in all fortune, they do mutual service to each other while they live. They accompany the one the other to the close of life; only by death are these companions parted; and, one dead, scarcely can the other remain living."

"Whoever has taken to himself an only wife, let him cherish her with love inviolate and constant mindfulness to the last mo-

ment of life; let father, mother, children, brothers and sisters give place to her; let the whole concourse of friends give place to the good-will established between man and wife. Truly, so should they; for father, mother, children, brothers, sisters, relatives and friends, are gifts of nature and of fortune; man and wife are a mystery of God, and the husband had the wife, the wife the husband, before father, mother, brother, children were."

The same devoted husband says, in the same treatise: "You therefore who wish to take a wife, let love be your inducement, not opinion; choose a wife, not a dress; marry a wife, not a dowry. In this temper having prayed to the omnipotent God, who alone gives a true wife to man, having sought also the consent of her parents, and shewn to them a due obedience, putting away all avarice, ambition, envy and fear; with mature self-communing, with free consent, with fervent but yet chaste and reasonable love, accept the wife given to you for a perpetual companion, not for a slave, by the hand of God; let your wisdom guide her with all gentleness and reverence. Do not submit her, but admit her, to your counsels; let her be in your house the mistress, in your family the mother."

I may in this connection suitably, and perhaps usefully (considering the object with which I avowedly write), say a few words on the general subject of ministers' marriages, with reference more particularly to Dissenting ministers of our own body.

Early in my own ministry I one day heard the argument seriously held (perhaps with a view to my own personal benefit, as I was then a bachelor), that Presbyterian ministers, as a general rule at least, should not marry. Their very slender salaries, and the social demands upon them more than in due proportion, were argument the first; the anxieties involved in bringing up a family on slender resources, the greater freedom and independence of the man who has the fewest worldly wants and wishes, were arguments second and third; the good of the church was the spiritual argument (number four), thrown in as decent passport to the worldliness of the others. A lady (strange to say, and she a married lady) was the champion of this argument. Like a wise woman of the world, as she was, she admitted one exception to her proposed rule of clerical celibacy, namely, that of a minister marrying a well-dowried woman. I was rather shocked at hearing such precepts of unblushing worldliness avowed, and evidently with a view to my benefit; and I drily suggested that if the minister did not marry a fortune, he must marry a school or a shop as well as a wife. The sentiment met with general approval, especially from the lady's husband, and also from the young unmarried ladies present. I had then just begun a school for the sake of helping my own kin and kind; but it was immediately understood, of course, that I had done it with a view to marriage.

We rightly repudiate the Romish rule of enforced clerical celibacy, as unnatural, cruel and immoral, as obstructive to the best developement of a man's character, and thereby injurious to his best usefulness as a minister. And in doing this, we must face like men the secular difficulties, not few nor small, which the rule of clerical celibacy is designed to evade. But we do not mean, in repudiating the doctrine of clerical celibacy, to insist absolutely that a man *must* be married in order to be an effective minister. That would be prescribing another arbitrary and unnatural condition. It is the being *officially* and *absolutely* placed out of the pale of ordinary human feeling and experience, that constitutes the sin at once against manly character and ministerial usefulness. To remain unmarried through some natural decree of Providence is no disqualification. But the vowed priest is not a real genuine man. How is he to be the teacher of life's duties in its most important relationships, who is forbidden to know or think of them in his own person? How is he to be the sympathizing friend and adviser in life's varied joys and sorrows, whom the chief of all those joys and sorrows are not permitted to touch? Apart from such a professional restriction, a man may (in this, as in any other walk of life), through the circumstances which so variously decide our experience, find his lot a solitary one perhaps all through life; and yet he has not renounced his manhood. Perhaps it has been most especially exercised. In many such cases, if we might know the secret history of a good and brave man's heart, it has not been unvisited by a noble, though perhaps sad, discipline of pure hope and bitter trial, which has given him the most needful human experience. We only claim, then, that the recognized public expounders of life's duties and hopes should be allowed, like other men, to experience the operation of the great laws of human life in their own personal history, at the hands of eternal Providence. And then, whatever specialty may attach to their particular calling in life, tending to modify the ordinary position of a married pair or their duties and usefulness in it, will only have to be looked at with the same pure and wise thoughtfulness with which so momentous a subject as marriage is regarded by all pure and wise hearts in every other station of life.

Certainly the position of a Christian minister, and that of a Dissenting minister especially, has its peculiarities which ought not to be overlooked, whether in the choice of a "proper mate" or "proper time to marry." In our denomination, indeed, we can happily repudiate altogether the notion which, in some Dissenting churches, makes the minister's wife a sort of female minister or deaconess to his congregation, not content with her being (like other men's wives) the head of his own family and household;—and soon, as the natural consequence, finds fault with her officiousness in the diaconate so thrust upon her. Her

best service to the religious body which recognizes her husband as its head, is fulfilled in her quiet influence upon his happiness and his consequent vigour and ability for duty, rather than in any direct personal intervention in the collective or individual concerns of its members.

The one specialty that attaches to her position is simply this, —that, through it, she naturally becomes acquainted with a wider and more miscellaneous circle of people than she could be expected to know or care about if she were any but a minister's wife. The physician's wife is not, through the mere fact of her being such, brought into acquaintance with the families of all his patients, nor the attorney's with those of his clients. But the minister's wife is naturally expected to become, in various degrees of kind interest and sympathy, the acquaintance and friend of her fellow-worshipers in her husband's church or chapel, with some limitation indeed in the case of our largest towns and the widely scattered members of their congregations. And this specialty calls for the exercise of good sense and tact as well as kind-heartedness on her part. Any other gentleman's wife has her social circle more defined and limited by equality of rank and education (or perhaps by the former only, with too little regard to the latter). And in like manner the nearest personal intimacies of the minister's wife, as a well-educated woman (which she must be), are necessarily limited by the test of education and manners; but beyond these intimacies of mental equality, her pleasant, easy, kindly acquaintance will gracefully fill up many of the intervening gaps between these classes and those towards whom the benevolence of a helping charity draws her steps. This is her best, as it is her natural and appropriate, contribution of Christian influence to the spirit of Society, which is so often unsocial in its exclusiveness, its jealousies, its rivalries, its shows and pretences. This most valuable kind of help I had in my ministry from your loved mother (for how short a time!) and from her daughters since, who have perpetuated, as far as daughters could, her sweet influence. "A prudent wife," says the proverb, "is from the Lord." None has more reason to say this with religious thankfulness than a happily married minister. To no man can a suitable and happy marriage be a greater blessing and help; to none can an unsuitable and unhappy one be a greater damage; because the blessing or the trial reaches his whole work of life more than another man's, that work of life being itself heart-work throughout. A man of business, or one whose profession supplies intellectual excitement in other departments, may leave his home sorrows behind when he goes to his work; but this man, in the very studies and meditations appropriate to his calling, is continually driven in upon his own personal and domestic experience for suggestions or for contrasts. If he is a true man, he will always preach and

teach from his heart; and as it is essential that this be sound and true, it is most important also that it be cheerful and buoyant.

I have heard the opinion expressed that rash, unsuitable and unhappy marriages are more numerous among ministers and studious men than among other classes. I do not think it is so, though the more rare combination of high qualities necessary on both sides for the truest happiness in this walk of life, might make such an opinion probable, unless credit be given for the influence of high moral qualities in smoothing and assimilating. Perhaps there is as large a proportion of early marriages, or at any rate of marriages resulting from early attachments, in this class as in any. And this is natural; for the young minister, and even the student in his college days, is brought more freely and easily into society than most other young men. And a very young attachment is, of course, always liable to prove unsuited to the mature characters and tastes of the persons concerned, except as its continuance through those important years when character is becoming matured may insure their growing to each other's tastes and learning to bear with each other's diversities. Some of the happiest marriages that I have known, whether among ministers or others, have been those arising from early attachment which has stood the prior test of some years' mutual knowledge and trust, and of patient, diligent work on the side of the young man till he has earned a position to justify his marriage. Among our ministers, where a position even of moderate competence is scarcely to be won, except by the combination of other work, the danger attendant upon a very early attachment is, that it may result in an imprudently early marriage and in worldly difficulties ever after. The *res angusta domi* is a fearful pressure upon a man's energy and usefulness in such a calling. It robs him of his true independence of position, and too probably of that of character also. For this reason, a friend of mine judged not amiss in saying that he could freely promote his son's wish to enter the ministry, because he had the means of making him partly independent of his congregational income, whereas, had it been otherwise, he should have dissuaded the youth from so uncertain a prospect. I thought my friend went a little too far, however, in proposing a "property qualification" as one of the conditions to be fulfilled by all candidates for our ministry. His son makes the better minister for this qualification; but there are, and have been and will, I trust, always be, many as good, who have done without it or have gradually earned it for themselves.

Still it is greatly to be desired that when a son of one of our wealthier families shews talents and dispositions suitable for the ministry, his parents would encourage his bent in that direction, and not countenance the vulgar but too prevalent idea which looks down upon the position of a Dissenting minister with con-

tempt, and tends practically to leave it open only to a lower social class. Those who now despise its lowly fortunes, will respect it in the hands of a man who has a modest fortune of his own, if he can also hold up its credit by at least average ability, power and zeal. To serious-minded young men of this order I believe the ministry among the Unitarians presents a truly happy and animating prospect. The quiet elegance of a studious life, lifted above the reach of carking cares, while excused from the paltry ambition of showy appearance, is the *beau ideal* of the intellectual and social life. Its evident usefulness, its most salutary influence in promoting education and social improvement, in raising the tone of morals, in keeping religion distinct from ceremonialism and superstition, and giving health and purity to human life within a wide range of direct action and a far wider circle of indirect operation, is a thought sufficient to excite a noble ambition in noble minds, which even average success will amply reward and bless. I have no misgiving for the competent success and real happiness of men thus qualified, or of others who may want the outward qualification of fortune, but who can proportionately more "endure hardness" of work on the one hand, and self-denial on the other. Let no one think our ministry is not needed, nor doubt that it is welcomed also. The world is only just beginning to deserve it and to be really ready for it.

MR. S. ROBINSON ON THE OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS OF UNITARIANISM.

My dear Sir,

The impartiality with which you have ever opened your journal to all discussions, conducted in a proper manner, upon the religious topics of the day, emboldens me to believe that you will not refuse me a little space for the expression of a thought or two upon a question, which has of late painfully agitated, and at times threatened to divide our body, and which, unless approached in a liberal and conciliatory spirit, may yet produce disastrous consequences.

We have recently heard a great deal of an Old and a New School of Unitarianism. I will entirely waive the question, how far such distinctions as can properly lay claim to the designation of a "school," are quite consistent with the principles of a denomination, which, admitting within its pale all who acknowledge as the basis of their faith the books of the New Testament, has always strenuously vindicated for every individual the right to interpret them for himself and to form his own belief, untrammelled by creeds and articles. Properly speaking, if we strictly

adhere to these principles, we can have only one school, the school of Free Christian Theology. These terms have come into use, however, and I must presume therefore that they have been found necessary to express certain corresponding ideas. I accept them, then, as marking, what has certainly a real existence, the manifestation in our denomination of two distinct tendencies of theological thought; and not in our denomination alone, be it remarked, but elsewhere also, not excepting the Established Church itself.

I know not where to look for any precise definitions of these two schools in the words of those who would rank themselves in the one rather than the other. Indeed, a precise definition would hardly be satisfactory. It could do little more than designate the extreme limits of each school—scarcely the opinions of any one large class. For they are perpetually melting the one into the other; and there are very few persons probably who incline in the main to the principles of the one school, who do not on a great number of points hold to those of the other also. Perhaps, however, I shall come near enough to the truth, for practical purposes, if, in broad terms, I characterize the Old School as resting the evidences of Christianity principally upon external and historical grounds and the scrupulous and literal fidelity of the scriptural records, including the miraculous agencies; without, however, undervaluing or neglecting the internal evidence: whilst the New School, without undervaluing or rejecting the internal evidence, but thinking it open to some serious objections, and not quite so conclusive as might be wished, is more disposed to rely for its proofs upon the internal evidences supplied by the consonance of its spiritual character and doctrines with the profoundest emotions and loftiest aspirations of the human mind. I hardly know whether I may add, that the former school finds in Christianity a more positive and dogmatic system, perhaps, than the latter; which is rather disposed to regard it as an enforcement of general moral and doctrinal principles, allowing of successive modifications and developments according to the changing requirements of successive generations.

Now if I am at all right in this view of the matter, I do not in the least deny that we have here some real and important differences. Neither will I take upon myself to be the judge which school most contains within itself the elements of truth. I only ask, Are the differences such as to render it imperative on the one entirely to separate itself from the other? Are they totally antagonistic? Do not they both of them, though by different ways, arrive at conclusions which have a great deal in common? Do not both agree in receiving the Christian Scriptures as a message from God to man? Do not both agree in acknowledging the authority of Christ as the Messenger by whom it was delivered? Do not both agree that it is in obedience to his com-

mands and in conformity with his precepts and example that we are bound to live? The adherents of the Old School are perfectly justified in taking their stand upon what they believe to be the firmer ground, and in what they consider the safer position; nor ought they to be charged on this account with bigotry or narrowness. But, on the other hand, will they be quite so able to repel this charge, if they hold themselves aloof from those of the other as treacherous allies or suspicious friends, and, abandoning the principle for which they have hitherto contended, and of which they have made their proudest boast,—the principle of unrestricted freedom of inquiry,—shew themselves disposed to put a limit upon it by saying, "To this point it may go, but it shall go no further"?

It is plainly perceived, and therefore readily admitted, that different kinds and degrees of evidence are necessary to produce conviction on differently constituted minds. It is less universally observed perhaps, though not less true, that this is the case with different generations. Whoever has studied the history of opinions can hardly have failed to remark, that the facts which have been appealed to as indisputable, the arguments which have been relied upon as unanswerable, in one age, tested by the advanced knowledge and superior light of another, have not been found equally satisfactory. Some bold assailant or careful investigator discovers a weak place in the foundations where all was supposed to be sound, and obliges the defenders to throw up new defences. During the present century, science and philosophy have made rapid strides, and been largely brought to bear upon almost every branch of human inquiry. Was it to be expected that they would not penetrate the domain of theology? Amongst other subjects, history has excited great interest and attracted to itself great attention; and the credibility of much early history, once received as entirely authentic, has suffered a rude shock. Is it wonderful that the historical evidence for a revealed religion has not escaped a closer investigation, or that the searching scrutiny of some subtle intellect has left upon minds of a certain order an uncomfortable impression that it is not quite so conclusive as to set at rest all uncertainty upon this momentous subject? We know that with many this is the fact; and are we charitable if we look coldly upon them because they seek a refuge from doubts in the irresistible appeal which Christianity makes to their own felt wants, their own inward feelings, and its entire harmony with their whole moral nature? Is it wise to repel the assistance of those who think that the most unanswerable way of meeting those doubts in others is to be found in arguments derived from the same sources? Does the one line of defence leave the other less strong than it was before? Ought we not to rejoice that there are many modes of defence and many sorts of defenders,—that minds inaccessible to one kind of reasoning may surrender

themselves up to another? According to my view of the matter, this New School, so called, is simply the natural, and even necessary, product of the circumstances of the times in which we live, —a phase through which we shall be obliged to pass in the process of the attempt to reconcile our theology with the presumed requirements of modern knowledge. I say the presumed requirements, for it may well be that other methods still of reconciling them may be found. In the mean time, why need we fear for the truth? It is neither the first time, nor the second time, that such a reconciliation has become necessary. It will very likely not be the last. And yet for all this, Religion has not the less firmly stood her ground.

We may deprecate the raising of difficulties and objections; but once raised, it is useless to ignore them. They meet us on every side and in every shape. They are forced upon us by the enemies of Christianity. They have been put into popular forms, and are found on the lips of the half-learned and uneducated. They are brought prominently into view in the writings of speculative or philosophical inquirers into the truth of revealed religion. They betray themselves even in the pages of the more thoughtful amongst its earnest and devoted friends. The doubt once awakened will not be lulled to sleep without receiving some satisfactory solution. The battle once begun must be fought out. We are fond of believing this to be a religious age. In the main, I think it really is so. Certainly for a long time past there has not been one in which religion has received more external marks of respect and reverence. Certainly never for a long time past have its ministers been more earnest and devoted, nor their disciples more zealous and numerous. The very agitation of these speculative doubts is in itself a testimony to the interest of the subject. But it is to be feared that under this fair surface there is an under-running current of quiet scepticism, to which, amongst other causes, may be due much of that indifference to religion of which we have heard latterly so much complaint. Is it not worth while to sound to the bottom its source and its direction? Why with our opinions should we throw ourselves into the ranks of those well-meaning but timid friends of religion, who would seem sometimes to be apprehensive lest too searching an examination may reveal some weakness in its foundation, or the fulness of faith be inconsistent with the full exercise of reason?

I fully admit the extreme value and satisfaction of a positive and defined faith. Happy, very happy, are those who possess it! To be unassailable, however, and lasting, it must be in a great measure of self-growth and self-determination. How far, even in the case of children, it is wise to do much more than try to educe the religious sentiment and to implant and nourish the religious feelings, is somewhat questionable. But it is much more questionable, how far the inculcation of a rigid dogmatic system should

be attempted with those of maturer age. Instances are not wanting—nay, they are many—of men, who, compelled by deeper thought and further investigation to give up one article of such a creed, have found no resting-place till they have passed into the opposite extreme. Bold and original speculations have great attractions for youthful minds, particularly those of an ardent and intellectual cast; and there is probably on the whole less danger for the youthful inquirer who has been familiarized with every aspect of the subject under the guidance of careful and candid teachers experienced in all its difficulties and objections, than for him who, less thoroughly prepared, encounters them for the first time in the intercourse of society or his own extended researches, and in a critical age disposed to submit every question of great interest to severe tests and a rigorous scrutiny.

Towards the close of a review of the "Rivulet Controversy," which appeared in your December number of last year (p. 733), occurs the following passage: "Let Unitarians con the lesson for their time of need, and learn that the moment they suffer the cry of heresy to be raised—the moment they practically deny the right of penetrating into fresh fields of theological thought—the moment they assume that Christian truth, as possessed by them, is an altogether complete and rounded thing—they must exchange the courtesy," &c. &c. I do not finish the sentence, because I do not believe that our controversy could pass into the consequences there indicated. But may I not ask, "Is not our time of need come?"

One thing there is which seems to me worthy of remark. Unitarianism has been accused of being a cold and negative religion,—more intent upon establishing a simple, reasonable and logical belief, than on warming the hearts and nourishing the devotional feelings of its professors. I will not enter here into an examination with what justice the charge has been made. If with any justice at all, it is attributable, I think, to the controversial attitude which in its commencement it was compelled to assume; not at all to anything inherent in its doctrines. What I wish to remark, however, is this,—that if it has of late years somewhat abandoned this attitude, and taken a deeper, a more earnest and more spiritual tone, this change appears to me to have come especially from that very school which some of us regard apparently with a suspicious eye, and not a little from the instructions and writings of those two eminent men to whom we have confided the education of our future ministers. Why, then, disturb ourselves with unworthy doubts, lest those who have been successful in giving a powerful impulse to the religious spirit of our denomination, should fail to leave the impress of the same spirit on the minds of their pupils? For myself, I entertain a confident expectation, shared I believe by numbers more, that from their hands will issue a zealous band of disci-

ples, not more learned to defend the truth and uphold the authority of Christianity, than inspired with a warm and earnest desire and determination to nourish in their own hearts and in those of others its exalted doctrines and benign influences.

I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

SAMUEL ROBINSON.

MR. LONG IN REPLY TO MR. TAYLER ON THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

33, Queen Anne Street, May 5th, 1857.

MY DEAR SIR,

IN a letter from Mr. Tayler in your last number, he expresses a wish that I should not delay my communication to you on the Resurrection, in reference to a view of that most important subject which a former letter of his countenanced, and which I said, in my first letter, seems to me "entirely subversive of the historical evidence of the truth of the Christian religion." I can hardly adequately express the satisfaction which the letter of my respected and highly-valued friend has given me, as he shews (what indeed I had anticipated) that he has read my strictures on his letters with no unkindly feelings. He has mentioned me in a manner which I am far from pretending to deserve. We are alike engaged in endeavouring to discover the truth, and shall both be equally glad to avail ourselves of every assistance, from whatever quarter it may come.

In order to bring the subject of our controversy perspicuously before your readers, I will here quote a passage of Mr. Tayler's letter in your February number, p. 95. Speaking of the resurrection, he expresses a doubt "whether the resurrection was literally a bodily one, or rather a manifestation to the spiritual sense, though still real and objective, which every Christian must be left to settle for himself." By the use of the word *rather*, I must presume that my excellent friend prefers the latter opinion respecting the resurrection to that which has been generally, indeed I believe till very lately universally, held in the Christian world. A quotation from a letter in your last number, p. 270, goes to support the same view of the subject. In reference to my first letter, Mr. Tayler says, "It must not be supposed that my belief in the reality of Christ's resurrection from the dead, as a *historically attested fact*, is not as firm as my friend's; though I am disposed to lay the main stress of the evidence for it not altogether on the same point as where it is placed by Mr. Long. The clear and emphatic testimony of the apostle Paul in the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, is, I am free to confess, the sheet-anchor of my belief on this subject."

I shall now proceed to examine what I will call, for shortness' sake, Mr. Tayler's scheme of the resurrection, and endeavour to shew that it cannot be reconciled with the accounts of that transaction in the Gospels; and that, if it be admitted, these narratives must be rejected as false; and that no ground for rational confidence in the gospel history will remain.

After reading again and again with close attention the passages which I have quoted from Mr. Tayler's letters, I feel it impossible to attain a clear and satisfactory view of his meaning. "A manifestation to the spiritual sense, though still real and objective," would seem to mean that the object manifested to the mind was purely spiritual, and of course unconnected with matter. But when I find St. Paul referred to as the sheet-anchor of my friend's belief, and look to the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, I find it difficult to avoid coming to the conclusion that some sort of material manifestation enters into the scheme. I will therefore take it both ways.

If the apostle only intended to convey to the minds of his readers that a merely spiritual manifestation of the presence of Jesus Christ had been made to him, I will not presume to assert that such a manifestation may not have been made in a manner perfectly satisfactory to his mind, because I cannot have the boldness and the folly to say by what means the Deity may impress and enlighten the human mind with divine truth; but I must without hesitation assert, that it could not have afforded a particle of evidence to any other mind. Is it possible that any other person could distinguish between a real revelation and the mere working of the imagination of Paul? The historical evidence of the truth of the Christian religion I have always considered to consist in a credible testimony to physical facts. I will proceed to shew that the apostle Paul, in the chapter we are considering, clearly refers to the bodily appearance of Jesus to his disciples after the resurrection.

In the early part of the chapter, the apostle says that he had received that Christ died and was buried, and that he rose again on the third day. What can this mean but that the body which was buried rose from the grave? I am not aware of a particle of evidence tending to prove that he has been understood in any other sense at any time since the first promulgation of Christianity. Can it then be believed that the whole Christian world has been deceived in this matter, and that it has been reserved to the nineteenth century to give a proper interpretation of the words of St. Paul? But he goes on to say that Christ was seen of Cephas, of the twelve, of above five hundred brethren at once, of James, and of all the apostles. Till I find any one who will attempt to give another explanation of these texts, I must rest in the conclusion that they refer to a bodily appearance of Christ. When Paul adds to this, "Last of all he was seen of me also, as

of one born out of time," he must undoubtedly mean that he had appeared to him in the same way as to others, namely, that it was a bodily appearance. If the apostle had intended to refer to a spiritual manifestation as the foundation of his belief, his references to the apostles and disciples would have been nothing to the purpose, as manifestations of a merely spiritual nature to them could have been no proof to him, or in any way strengthened his conviction that such a manifestation had been made to him. The apostle Paul, then, admits the truth of the bodily resurrection of Christ, and his own testimony really adds nothing to the weight of the other apostles, since it does not appear that he had any personal knowledge of Jesus in his lifetime, or had ever even seen him. That Christ really did appear to Paul I fully believe, because all we know of his character leads us to place perfect reliance on his veracity.

Only one other explanation of Mr. Tayler's resurrection scheme occurs to me. It may mean that although the body of Jesus was not really raised from the grave, yet such a representation of it as satisfied the apostles of the fact of his being alive actually did appear to them, and that this appearance (whatever it was) affords satisfactory proof of his renewed life. This is, in truth, reducing the doctrine of the resurrection to a ghost story. It will be no difficult matter to shew that it is entirely at variance with the accounts given in the Gospels of the resurrection. We will now proceed to examine them.

The account of the resurrection in the Gospel of St. Matthew is very concise. I have given reasons elsewhere for thinking that the narrative we now have is not the whole of what was written by the apostle, but that some part of it must have been lost. Be this as it may, enough remains to prove that Matthew's report is of a real resurrection of the body of Jesus from the grave. He tells us that the angel told the women that Jesus was risen, and that he said, "Come and see the place where the Lord lay." Matthew does not indeed add that the women inspected the empty grave, but the narrative implies it; and he afterwards tells us that Jesus met them, and that they "held him by the feet." The appearance, then, was a real bodily substance, tangible as well as visible. St. Mark's account is very short; and its only application to our present purpose is, that the women found that the body was not in the sepulchre. St. Luke's account is fuller. He tells us that not only the women, but that Peter also, found that the body of Jesus was not in the sepulchre. He then introduces the interesting narrative of an interview of Jesus with two disciples at Emmaus, when "he sat at meat with them, and took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to them,"—acts which no reasonable person would attribute to a spirit unclothed with a material organization. Jesus expressly disclaims being so in the interview with the apostles and disciples at Jerusalem

which immediately followed, when he says, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." After that, "they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb; and he took it, and did eat before them." St. John, the beloved disciple, who alone, when all his apostles had forsaken their Master and fled, had the courage to return and stand by him as he hung on the cross, and to whom Jesus committed the care of his mother in his dying hour, is more express in his narration of the events which followed the resurrection than the other evangelists. I shall select such parts as clearly shew that he believed in a resurrection of the body of Christ. Jesus' language to Thomas is quite unequivocal: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." In the next chapter we have an account of an interview with some of his disciples, when he asks them to come and dine, and gives them bread and fish. It is not indeed expressly said that he partook of the food, but it may be rationally implied from the narrative that he did so.

Such are the relations by the four evangelists of the appearances of Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection. That they mean that the same body which was buried rose again and appeared to his disciples, appears to me perfectly clear; and I am not aware that that interpretation of the narratives in question has ever been doubted. As these narratives are quite inconsistent with any meaning which I can find in Mr. Tayler's scheme, I might here close my case, leaving it to him to shew either that I have misconceived his meaning, or that there is some mode of reconciling his scheme with the gospel narratives, or that the narratives are undeserving of credit. It seems to me, however, a better course to refer to the accounts of the conduct of the apostles in the book of Acts, in reference to the subject of the resurrection. Previously to pursuing this inquiry, I will ask a question: If the body of Jesus was not raised from the dead, what became of it? Till I shall be told the contrary, I shall assume that no one believes the story given by Matthew, as asserted by the Roman soldiers, that the disciples stole away the body of Jesus while the soldiers slept. If, indeed, the truth of this story were admitted, it would follow that the resurrection was a cunningly-devised fable, and consequently that the disciples are wholly undeserving of credit. If, then, the body remained in the grave, it shared the fate of other corpses, and was corrupted like them. How does this agree with the account of St. Peter, Acts ii.? The apostle expressly tells us that God raised up Jesus, and that his flesh did not see corruption. Acts iii. 15, Peter says, "Ye killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses." Acts iv. 10, he again asserts the same fact before the high priest and

others. Acts v. 32, after a similar statement, he adds, "and we are witnesses of these things." Acts x. 40, 41, on the first preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, Peter says, "Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." It would be useless to give any more testimonies. The passages already cited shew clearly, that the authors of the Gospels and the book of Acts distinctly assert that the body of Jesus Christ, which had been buried, was raised by God from the dead, and that the apostles were appointed by God to be witnesses of the resurrection. Now for what purpose were they appointed to be witnesses of this unspeakably important fact? Assuredly, because it affords an irrefragable proof that Jesus Christ was, what he always professed himself to be, a Teacher sent from God to reveal His will to the human race. Such has been the opinion of Christians in all ages, and of all churches and sects. Never, as far as I have read or heard, has an individual believed in the resurrection of Jesus, and denied the divine authority of his religion.

I can conjecture only two grounds on which the assertion of St. Paul, who we have no reason to believe had ever seen Jesus before his death, is to be considered of greater weight than the testimony of the apostles, who professed themselves to be the appointed witnesses of the resurrection: either the accounts given by the evangelists, or the assertions of the apostles, are false; the evangelists gave narratives of events which never happened, or the apostles asserted what they knew to be false; the history is a fiction, or the apostles are—I cannot allow myself to say what. On either supposition, the historical evidence of the facts on the truth of which, combined indeed with the internal evidence arising from the perfect character of Christ and his pure and holy teachings, Christianity has hitherto been held to rest, is totally destroyed; for if the accounts of the resurrection be false, I can see no reason to believe that any other part of the gospel narratives is true.

I now take leave of this, to me, very painful subject. I sincerely believe and deeply feel that the pure and spiritual religious sentiments of my excellent friend are worthy of the highest regard and esteem; but that very circumstance renders what appear to me to be his errors the more likely to produce evil. However we may differ on this subject, I know of no one with whom on some of the most important points of Christianity I more fully agree.

I am, dear Sir, yours very truly,

GEORGE LONG.

UNITARIANS OF TRANSYLVANIA.

[The following extract from a sermon preached by the Rev. John Kenrick, at St. Saviourgate chapel, York, on Sunday, May 17, on behalf of the Unitarians of Transylvania, is sent for insertion in the Christian Reformer, at the request of the Editor.]

It may be necessary, even for the information of most of the ordinary worshipers in this place, and still more of those whom sympathy or curiosity has brought hither to-day, to explain how it has happened that a community of Unitarians has established itself among the Carpathian Mountains, and in this corner of the Austrian empire. In the beginning of the 16th century, there was in the north of Italy and in Tuscany an earnest spirit of religious inquiry. Many thoughtful men inclined towards the doctrines of Luther and Calvin; but there were those also who deemed that these eminent Reformers had retained much ancient error in their respective creeds, and who abandoned the doctrine of the Trinity and other points of orthodoxy necessarily connected with it. Lælius and Faustus Socinus were natives of Siena, in Tuscany; George Blandrata, of Piedmont. But the kindling spark was soon trodden out by the Inquisition, and the professors of Unitarianism were compelled to take refuge in Poland. Here they established numerous churches of Antitrinitarians, and from Poland this doctrine was transplanted into Transylvania by Blandrata. Being appointed to the post of Court Physician by John Zapolya, the Prince of that country, whose daughter was married to the King of Poland, he diffused his doctrine extensively among the higher classes; while the talents of Francis Davidis, an eloquent preacher, gained it popularity among the lower orders. It was not without strong opposition from both Lutherans and Calvinists that Unitarianism was permitted to make its way in Transylvania. Still it continued to flourish, and in the reign of John II. it was placed among the *received* religions (as opposed to the merely tolerated), and nominally on the same footing as the Catholic, the Lutheran and the Calvinistic. The increase of the Unitarians was retarded by an unhappy and disgraceful dispute between Blandrata and Davidis respecting the invocation of Christ, in which the courtly physician shewed himself very deficient in candour and humanity. Blandrata's views ultimately triumphed; but though the invocation of Christ remains among the formal articles of the Unitarian creed, in practice their worship is addressed to the Father only. Under the Catholic sovereigns of the House of Austria, they were exposed to many infractions of the privileges to which they were entitled. The Jesuits were invited into the country and encouraged to establish their missions in those places in which the Unitarians most abounded; their printing-press was taken from them and

given to the Jesuits, and all the professors of their faith were driven from Court. In the solemn act by which, in 1689, Transylvania was permanently annexed to the House of Austria, the free exercise of their religion, and the possession of their churches, schools, lands and political rights, were confirmed to them in as ample a measure as to the Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists. But they were not long in feeling the effect of the disfavour with which a rational religion must always be regarded by an arbitrary government. Their printing-press was again seized, and it was only during the temporary ascendancy of liberality in Austria in the reign of Joseph II., towards the close of the 18th century, that they were allowed to print a text-book for the instruction of their students in theology. Though the constitution declared them equally eligible to all offices of State with the members of the other confessions, they were carefully withheld from them; even the constitutional right that one of the prothonotaries of the Supreme Court of Judicature should be a Unitarian was evaded. The consequence has been that the higher orders of nobility who once belonged to their communion, have gone over to the religion of the Court. A considerable number of the smaller landed gentry, however, still adhere to them; but they chiefly consist of the middle and lower classes of the town population, and the peasantry of the Szeklerland, the mountainous district which borders on Moldavia. Their primary churches are above one hundred, and their present numbers are between 50,000 and 60,000.

It is not, however, because the sunshine of Court favour has been withdrawn from them that the Unitarians of Transylvania complain. They are threatened at this moment with a far more serious evil, in the attempt of the Government to gain the control of their schools and colleges. In all ages men have sought to gratify the love of power, to satiate their revenge, or suppress obnoxious opinion, by imposing restrictions on education or perverting its influence. We are told by an ancient author that the allies of the Mitylenæans having revolted, vengeance was to be inflicted for their crime.* The laws of humanity were little regarded in that age, and many cruel punishments had been inflicted upon rebels. Sometimes the whole population was massacred; sometimes all the males of a certain age; sometimes every tenth male, the rest being sold for slaves; sometimes their hands were mutilated, that they might not be able to handle the oar or the spear. The Mitylenæans adopted none of these methods of punishment, but they forbade their revolted subjects to educate their children; thinking, says the historian who reports the decree, that this was the most grievous of all penalties, to see their children pass through life in ignorance and want of liberal culture.†

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* Ælian Var. Hist. vii. 15. † Ἐν ἀμαθίᾳ καὶ ἀμουσίᾳ καταβιῶναι.

These were Heathens, and their object was at once to punish and degrade. Christian powers have employed the same means for equally unhallowed purposes, to punish dissent and extirpate heresy. The Greek emperor who closed the Pagan schools of philosophy at Athens, and drove out its teachers, would have done better to have trusted to the force of truth for the complete triumph of the gospel. In the long struggle between the Protestants and Romanists in modern Europe, it has always been the aim of the latter to take the guidance of education out of the hands of parents, and place it in those of the government and the priesthood. When Louis XIV. prepared the way, by the oppression of the Huguenots, for their final extinction, as he hoped, by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, his first step was to close their colleges and impose such difficulties on the maintenance of their schools, that they were compelled to leave their children without education, or to obtain it from the enemies of their faith, who spared no art to seduce them from the religion of their parents.* Dominant Protestant churches have been equally unscrupulous. In the hope of suppressing Puritanism, it was enacted in the reign of Queen Elizabeth that no one should teach school without a licence from the Archbishop, which was granted only on condition of conformity.† By the Act for the Suppression of Schism, which was to have come into operation on the very day of Queen Anne's death, the penalty of three months' imprisonment, with disqualification for ever teaching school again, was to be inflicted on any schoolmaster who should willingly be present at Dissenting worship.‡ Till the reign of George III., Dissenting schoolmasters were compelled by law to subscribe the doctrinal Articles of the Church of England and frequent its worship. Equally hard measure has been dealt to the Roman Catholics, who were not only prohibited in the reigns of James and Charles I. from keeping schools in England, but were severely punished if they sent their children to any Popish school, college or seminary abroad. In Ireland till lately, perhaps still, Protestant endowed schools have been shamefully abused, as the indirect means of making proselytes from Romanism. It is a natural and praiseworthy feeling which induces parents to make the greatest sacrifices rather than suffer their children to be seduced and inveigled into conformity. It is a cruel and hateful policy which places before them the alternative of letting them grow up in ignorance, or accepting education from the hands of those whom they know to be plotting their alienation from the faith of their fathers. The foundations of parental authority and filial love are sapped, when the child is taught to regard the religion of his father and mother with

* Sismondi Hist. des Français, ch. xxx. 34.
† Neal, i. 406. ‡ Neal, v. 96.

hatred and contempt; and truth is outraged by the influence exercised over minds too tender to judge of evidence or form rational convictions.

The public mind of England is at this moment unusually sensitive on the subject of religious education. Among our national deficiencies none is more palpable or more urgent than the want of some comprehensive system of national instruction. Hundreds of thousands of children are growing up in ignorance and sin, for the want of such a system. And what is it which year after year foils the efforts of the greatest statesmen of the age and nullifies their plans? The mutual jealousy of churches and sects. Nonconformist will not trust Churchman, Churchman will not trust Romanist, heterodox Dissenter will not trust orthodox Dissenter, Jew will not trust Christian, and none of them will trust the Government, with influence or control over religious education; and so the great work stands still. Even the system which was devised to unite all Protestants, by respecting the religious opinions of all, and confining religious teaching to the Scriptures which all acknowledge, has forfeited its original character, and been converted into an engine of proselytism. Can we be surprised, then, that a feeble community, like the Unitarians of Transylvania, stripped of its political liberties, destitute of the safeguard of a free press, conscious that it is odious beyond all other forms of Protestantism to its Roman Catholic rulers, should view the interference of Government in education with alarm?

True, it is not in the way of persecution or direct restriction that they are threatened. The demand of the government that they should more than triple the amount of their educational endowments, or lose the privilege of granting those degrees which are the passport to all the liberal professions; or accept government aid along with government control—may seem harmless, or even praiseworthy. Austria thinks the provision made for education by the Unitarians inadequate, and in its paternal anxiety to raise the standard, calls on them to provide more Professors and give them larger salaries. Nay, such is its liberality, that it gives them to understand, that if their own means are insufficient it will aid them, on the easy condition of their submitting to its control. But let us not be deceived by specious words; "the voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." It is not alleged that incompetent men are appointed Professors and Masters in the Unitarian schools of Transylvania, or that the pupils sent forth from them fall short in attainment of those who have been trained in other colleges and schools. They themselves are not imposed upon. They know that the Austrian government has surrendered its own civil rights to the Pope, that it has placed education under the control of the Jesuits, the most learned, the most subtle and the most dangerous enemies

of Protestantism. They have no doubt that the real object is to close their schools and colleges by a demand so enormous that it was thought a poor community could never find the means of answering it. Such a result is viewed with horror by the whole body of the Unitarians; the few rich men among them have contributed of their riches, and the poor of their poverty, "to their power, yea and beyond their power," in order to avert this great calamity. There is yet a deficiency, which they ask their fellow-believers in England and America to supply. We are this day to answer to their appeal.

*** The history of the establishment of Unitarianism in Poland and Transylvania may be found in Toulmin's Memoirs of Faustus Socinus, Lindsey's Historical View, Dr. Rees's Preface to his Translation of the Racovian Catechism, Wallace's Antitrinitarian Biography, under the names of the Socini, Blandrata, Davidis, &c. An account of the Unitarians of Transylvania, as they existed in 1819, is given in the Monthly Repository for April 1820, from which an extract is given in Wallace, III. 594. See also M. R. 1831, p. 648; 1822, p. 437. Mr. Paget passes lightly over the state of the Unitarians in his Hungary and Transylvania, II. ch. xiv., but has given a full account of them in Dr. Beard's work, "Unitarianism in its Actual Condition."

ON THE RECENT REVIEW OF CURETON'S IGNATIUS, BY THE REVIEWER.

Sir,

I have received intimations from more than one quarter of the error I have committed, in my review of Cureton's Corpus Ignatianum (C. R. p. 263), in asserting that Lachmann reads ὁ μονογένης θεός, in John i. 18. I was probably led into it by an imperfect remembrance of a passage in Dr. Tregelles's Account of the Greek New Testament, in which he says, "When Lachmann really knew from me the MS. authority in favour of θεός, he admitted the claim of that word to stand in the text, instead of υἱός." Θεός, therefore, is supported by his authority, though not by his text. I have spoken of this reading as "very slenderly supported by MS. authority." I learn from the same passage of Tregelles's work, that since the publication of Lachmann's text, θεός has been found in two uncial MSS., B and C, which raises its authority much higher than I had placed it.

T. C. H. inquires, "How can the appearance of the word *leopard* in the Epistles of Ignatius be any objection to their genuineness?" Ignatius wrote in Greek, and says that he had been fighting δέκα λεοπάρδοις. Bochart objected that *leopardus* is a purely Latin word, which never came into use even in Latin till the age of Constantine, and therefore that an Epistle which contained it could not have been written by a Greek in the age of Trajan. The answer to this is, that *leopardus* was probably in use earlier than the reign of Constantine, as appears from the passage quoted from the Augustan History (C. R. p. 260). It might therefore have been borrowed from the Latin and used in Greek, instead of the proper Greek word πάρδαλις, by a writer of the age of Trajan.

The Reviewer of Cureton's Work.

INTELLIGENCE.

THE RECENT MEETING OF THE COLLEGE TRUSTEES.

The report which we gave in our last No. of this meeting has been read with great interest in various parts of the kingdom, and has since been reprinted, with a few alterations and some important additions, by our excellent contemporary the *Inquirer*. We desire now to call attention to some additions to and suggested corrections of our original report, only premising that we decline to undertake the responsibility of vouching for the verbal accuracy of any one of the revisions which, in compliance with the wishes of the respective speakers, we proceed to print.

We are glad to be able to supply the more important parts of Mr. Henry W. Busk's letter, as read by Mr. Smale. After explaining the cause of his being unexpectedly detained in London, the letter proceeded to this effect:

I deeply regret that I am thus prevented from attending at the Manchester meeting to-morrow; for I am very desirous that what I have gathered of the constitution and practice of the Trustees for the last hundred years, should be stated so as to shew clearly that in all important matters the Trustees have themselves habitually acted, and have always acted unanimously, or, where any considerable difference of opinion existed, have appointed special committees of inquiry, and considered and discussed the disputed points till all, or all but one or two, of the Trustees were convinced. Never before has there been an attempt to change the scheme against the wishes of any considerable number of the supporters of the College, so far at least as I am aware.

The original proposal for the institution, I see, expressly authorizes Trustees to vote by proxy. I therefore by this letter empower and request you to vote for me and as my proxy at the meeting called for to-morrow at noon in Cross-Street Chapel-room, Manchester.

A correspondent reminds us that it is scarcely correct to say that decision was given against Mr. Busk's application, as the previous question was carried, and so no decision was given on the propriety of admitting votes by proxy.

From Mr. Bowman we have received a note desiring the correction of an error of the press, which would of itself be obvious to every careful reader.

Manchester, May 14, 1857.

Sir,—The reputation for accuracy which the Christian Reformer so deservedly enjoys, makes it the more necessary to notice any error of the press that may have accidentally crept in. In the report, in your last number, of my remarks at the College meeting of the 16th April, the misprint of one letter so destroys the sense of the passage in which it occurs, that I must beg you to correct it. I am represented as saying that a solution was "*presented*" by a certain gentleman. What I really said was, as indeed the context shews, that by suddenly taking out of the hands of the theological officers of the College a question which they were on the point of bringing to an amicable arrangement, he *prevented* a solution which would otherwise have been arrived at, and which would have avoided our present difficulties.

E. Bowman.

Of Rev. Charles Beard's speech we give, by request, a somewhat fuller report, and beg to add, that in stating that he had much difficulty in obtaining a hearing, we simply intended to shew how impatient the meeting was to come to a vote, and not to imply that the meeting was specially indisposed to hear him.

Rev. Charles Beard said that he claimed the right of reply to Mr. Bowman's accusations against the Special Report and the authors of it. The whole meaning of Mr. Bowman's speech was an attempt to prove that the members of the Committee who had supported Mr. Martineau had been engaged in a long conspiracy to eject Mr. Smith for the purpose of putting Mr. Martineau in his place. To this he gave an indignant denial, protesting against the imputation of unworthy and personal motives to those who were as sincerely anxious for the welfare of the College as Mr. Bowman himself. To the charge of having omitted important minutes of the Committee's proceedings, he replied, that the Secretaries were not called upon by the circumstances of the case to publish the College correspondence; and contended that the admission of the Protest upon the minutes and the subsequent publication of the fact, were sufficient evidence of impartiality. The single inaccuracy which Mr. Bowman had

detected was contained in a resolution hastily drawn by the Chairman of the Committee, which Mr. Bowman had concurred with others in passing, upon which he had not chosen to animadvert in Committee, but which he had reserved to form an article of accusation against the Secretaries in a public meeting of Trustees, forgetting that at the same time he accused himself. Mr. Beard went on to say, that of the sixty-nine Trustees who had signed the Protest, only twenty-two had been present at the meeting of the 22nd of January, and that the rest had therefore acted without any personal acquaintance with the discussions which had taken place. A Protest he understood, however, to be, a document by which, after an event was fully consummated, certain persons, who had had a full knowledge of all the circumstances, recorded a vital difference with those who had brought the event about. Did the one, two or three reasons for which some persons signed the Protest, constitute a vital difference? Was it signed with a full knowledge of all the circumstances? It was published before the Special Report, which nevertheless the Committee issued the moment they were themselves in possession of all the materials. And the event shewed that many Trustees signed it under misapprehensions, which the publication of the Special Report instantly removed. Would it not therefore have been not only more friendly, but more just to the Committee, to have waited for their statement of the case? With regard to the amendment, why should such a meeting as that, the largest ever assembled, consisting of gentlemen from every part of the country, be called upon to abdicate its legal functions? Mr. Long, in moving the amendment, had made this among other statements—that the instructions of Mr. Martineau and Mr. Tayler led to scepticism in the matter of miracles. Now he knew from Mr. M. himself that he denied, and would deny were he present, the charge of anti-supernaturalism. As one who had received his theological training under the two gentlemen named, he denied that their teaching had the tendency alleged by Mr. Long. "Mr. Martineau's style was obscure." How was it, then, that he had won so wide an influence, and that so large a concourse had that day assembled to testify their admiration for him? And the meeting must recollect, too, that they were not about to pass judgment on new men. Distrust for the future implied dissatisfaction with the past; and an adverse verdict to-day would declare that for seventeen years Mr. Tayler and Mr. Martineau had not adequately performed the duties of their office. In conclusion, Mr. Beard disclaimed the position of an advocate either for the Committee or Mr. Martineau. The former would feel that they had acted to the best of their judgment in difficult circumstances; and if compelled to retire from office, would regret only that principles which they deemed of the highest importance were not so regarded by the Trustees. Mr. Martineau would content himself with the unabated love and admiration of his friends, and the thought that he had indelibly placed his impress on the ministers of the next generation. It was for itself that the meeting had chiefly to care. It was for it to decide whether something like an indefinite creed, the more galling because unwritten, was to be introduced into its institution; whether, with a glorious opportunity of for ever laying down the principle of free theological learning, it should be said that the Unitarian church preferred to fall back into the ranks of creed-bound churches, and was afraid of following God's truth whithersoever it pleased to lead.

From Mr. Mardon, of whose speech we felt it impossible to attempt a report, we have received what follows. It will be seen that he alludes to some reports of his speech which are faulty. His remarks on this head do not apply to what appeared in the C. R.

Sidmouth, May 14, 1857.

Sir,—I cannot vouch for the verbal correctness of this speech of mine; but it is *substantially* the same as I delivered it. The four principal points were read from a MS. book in my hand, having written them down that morning. My object was a simple extension of these points so far as the clamour from certain parts of the meeting permitted me. The reports which I have seen have represented me as having wholly directed my observations against Mr. Martineau. This will be found to be a mistake.

B. Mardon.

Mr. Chairman,—I have the unexpected pleasure of seeing you here from the West of England, as I know you to have been a personal friend and admirer of the late venerable Dr. Toulmin, of Taunton and Birmingham. Notwithstanding the evident indisposition in a part of this audience to hear me, as I have travelled some two hundred and forty miles at the call of duty to attend this meeting, I trust I may be listened to while I state the grounds of my conviction that the Protest was necessary, and the amendment moved by Mr. Long perfectly reasonable.

The Protest involves the question, Are the two gentlemen, Mr. Tayler and Mr. Martineau, proper *alone* to conduct the theological education of our College? I am obliged to say No. My reasons are fourfold.

1. For the last three years it has been a subject of great regret with me, that a former fellow-student of mine, Principal of Manchester New College (we went to Glasgow together, he as a student and I as minister), does not accept the supernatural origin of Christianity; or if he does believe it himself, he takes anything but the proper way to impart that faith to others. I speak from having heard Mr. Tayler in two of his lectures as Ecclesiastical Professor after the removal of the College to London. I was asked at the Quinquennial Meeting of the students at York in 1853, to speak on the success of the removal to London, and I spoke willingly. I was then a minister in London, and went with reasonable curiosity to hear some of the lectures delivered in University Hall. I did not expect that Mr. Tayler would go into the question of Christian Evidence, as there was another course of lectures on that subject by a different Professor. Mr. Tayler, however, described the various forms of religion which preceded Christianity—what he called Feticism, the Patriarchal, the Philosophy of Zoroaster, and at last came to our own religion. He considered Christianity as the natural working out of the human mind from the previous systems, laying much stress upon the prophets as religious teachers, but ignoring, as it seemed to me, the Law of Moses, certainly denying the antiquity usually ascribed to it. And all this was done in the way of positive, one-sided statement, without the least reference to other writers who might differ from him. [In this, I cannot but feel the pertinence and truth of what Mr. Rayner Wood, though a former member of Mr. Tayler's congregation and a personal friend, said at the meeting.]

These statements affected me no otherwise than to lead me to reject such notions as fanciful and unaccompanied with proper evidence. But upon younger men, with minds uninformed upon the subject, they would naturally leave, and I know that they did leave, a different impression. Soon after attending these lectures, I thought it my duty to inform an officer of Manchester College, who happened to be an early friend of mine, of what I had heard. Mr. Tayler was led by a private communication from him to write a long letter, almost a dissertation, in his defence, and in illustration of his meaning. This letter I was permitted to see. But instead of satisfying my doubts, its contents quite confirmed me in the correctness of my impression. I have thought so ever since; yet I have never before made my impression public till I now speak to a large number of the managers of the College. I shall add here that I have never doubted the amiable and pious disposition of the gentleman on whom I thus feel called upon to animadvert.

2. Mr. Martineau (of whose talents and character I have always formed a very high estimate) does not seem to me peculiarly suitable for the theological education of our ministers, especially when exclusively conjoined with Mr. Tayler, for the following reason among others. A sermon preached by him a few years ago, heard and reviewed by Principal Vaughan at the time, was published by Mr. Martineau, though confessed by him to be incomplete, and by itself hardly intelligible, yet unaccompanied with notes to supply the deficiency. I read that pamphlet, and to my utter surprise found this sentence in it, which I am obliged just now to cite from memory: "That Jesus is the Christ is an old Jewish *error*." An old Jewish error! Why, this is the turning-point between Jewish believers and Jewish unbelievers. The famous treatise of the great Mr. Locke, "The Reasonableness of Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures," shews with the force of demonstration that this is the proposition upon which Christianity rests —nay, all that is necessary to be believed in order to make a Christian. [The Visitor of the College, Mr. John Kenrick, here courteously interposed the question, "Did Mr. Martineau say, Jesus is the Christ, or Jesus is the Messiah?" Mr. Mardon replied, Mr. Kenrick knows full well that the one is a Greek word and the other a Hebrew word signifying exactly the same thing. Another observation fell from Mr. K. which Mr. M. much regretted that he could not exactly hear.] Mr. Mardon added that he never knew of a Professor of Christian Theology, in England at least, who had ever made such a statement as this of Mr. Martineau. Let it then be considered that the eyes of the Independents are upon us.

3. Because I think the tendency of this teaching has been in many instances evident among the young men designed for the ministry since the College was removed from York to Manchester. Much has been said too, in commendation of these Professors, of the peculiar advantages to be enjoyed under them, as if sound learning and free inquiry were

almost new under this arrangement. But I will venture to affirm that sound learning and free inquiry were enjoyed and practised under Mr. Wellbeloved and Mr. Kenrick, among whose pupils little or no tendency to scepticism was discoverable. Mr. Thom, in his able and eloquent speech, spoke of the gentlemen who have taken part in the Protest, as opposed to religious liberty and private judgment. I can answer for myself. My ministry in early life for more than nine years among the Calvinists of the North, gave me a pretty good training, and instructed me in the full value of personal inquiry and religious liberty. I laugh at the idea of being opposed to personal investigation and religious liberty. I can say for myself and those with whom I associate that we are for liberty, but not for licentiousness.

Mr. Mardon thought he perceived a chief interruption in one quarter from the younger men, and called out—I admire the *docility* of the pupils, for they come out complete fac-similes of Messrs. Tayler and Martineau.

4. When I was in Bath in the year 1849, being somewhat out of health, I had the opportunity of visiting my old friend and intimate class-mate, the Rev. Robert Wallace, who then distinctly told me, of his own accord, that the main reason why he gave up his Professorship at Manchester was, that he saw the tendency of the instruction delivered there on the minds of the young men. [Here a great outbreak of disapprobation occurred, literally true as was the communication which Mr. Mardon had for the first time made public, and this after eight years. The disapprobation was explained to me afterwards to have been in consequence of my having said "in confidence;" my meaning was, "confidingly," or "as a friend." He told me more than he would have told others. But certainly Mr. Wallace did not request me to keep the matter secret.] I do not say that my friend Mr. Wallace was infallible. I knew his learning, I entirely trusted in his sincerity, and I firmly believe in his discreet and Christian zeal; and it is my opinion that if he and other learned, pious Unitarian ministers that have passed away, could now be present with us, they would declare, as I do from the bottom of my soul, that to entrust the *entire* theological education of our future ministers to these two gentlemen, is in the highest degree perilous and indefensible.

Mr. E. W. Field spoke previously to the first and principal division, and for a report of his speech we are indebted to the *Inquirer*.

Mr. Edwin W. Field had hoped not to have occupied their time on the first resolution at that late hour, especially as he should feel it his duty to lay two other important resolutions before the Trustees for their consideration, but Mr. Mardon's speech had made it necessary for him to rise. Every one knows what becomes of Reason when Fear comes in. It was said of Fear that *non habet aures*, and he (Mr. Field) congratulated himself he had it in his power to do something, at least as far as Mr. Mardon was concerned, to allay the most extraordinary theological panic it had ever been his fortune to witness. He held in his hand a letter from one of Mr. Mardon's most distinguished pupils —a gentleman whose soundness in the faith and depth of devotional character was unquestioned by every one who had ever known him, a man of a temperament singularly alive to any approach in a Professor toward pretending to teach one thing while he was really desiring to teach another,—one who would recoil from any teaching adverse to the truest and deepest Christianity, and whose evidence he (Mr. Field) was sure Mr. Mardon would accept before almost any one's. Mr. Field alluded to his own most esteemed and valued minister, Dr. Sadler. Dr. Sadler had attended Mr. Martineau's lectures ever since the College was removed to London in 1854; and so unjust did he feel the attack made on Mr. Martineau, to which attack Mr. Mardon's speech had given the true focal expression, that he (Dr. Sadler) had all but insisted on every member of his (Dr. Sadler's) congregation who was a Trustee attending that meeting. Mr. Field believed out of that little congregation there were not less than ten or twelve Trustees at the present meeting. Dr. Sadler's letter was as follows:

"I much regret that I am not a Trustee of Manchester New College, for I regard the issue of the discussion to take place on Thursday as of vital importance to our body. But it is a consolation to me to know that though I have no voice in the result, my congregation will be numerously represented. As you are aware, I have attended Mr. Martineau's lectures on Ethical Philosophy from the commencement of the course in 1854, and I entirely subscribe to the high estimate of the value of his instructions, which has been formed, I believe, with scarcely a single exception, by those who have studied under his direction. When I consider his mastery of his subject, his power of illustrating it to others, and the moral and religious tone with which he approaches it, it seems to me we have reason to con-

gratulate ourselves on the superior advantages his services enable us to offer to our students. Of all the Professors, either in this country or in Germany, whose lectures I have had the privilege of attending, I do not hesitate to say that in my opinion not one combines in either greater measure or greater number the highest qualifications of a teacher. Indeed, eminent as Mr. Martineau is in many respects, I believe he truly interprets his vocation when he expresses the feeling that the work proposed to him is, of all the offices of life, that which he can best fulfil. But I cannot help thinking a still more important question than even the appointment of a most efficient Professor is involved in the present discussion, viz., whether we are prepared to trust in a free study of Theology with a reverent spirit? If our answer be in the affirmative, whence the fear of this or that school, and whence the solemn Protest of seventy Trustees against a Professor who had been regularly and constitutionally appointed? No one, I apprehend, will venture to insinuate that Mr. Martineau or Mr. Tayler is wanting in reverence; and they not only possess it themselves, but also have singular power of inspiring it in young men. If our fathers had talked about the danger of this or that opinion, and this or that man, it is evident that we, as a denomination, could not have existed. I have been particularly pained to hear the accusation that Mr. Martineau denies the miraculous in Christianity. That this accusation is contrary to fact I have the best possible reasons for knowing, and its origin is simply a different method of looking at the Christian Evidences; but what becomes of our freedom if such a difference may not be allowed? I wish my brethren in the ministry would bear in mind that the force of the evidences lies in their *truth*, and that it is not alone by one particular way of handling them that their truth may be received and felt. The battle of religious freedom, I am afraid, will have to be fought in every generation, for impatience of differences appears to be an infirmity of *human nature;* but I hope this infirmity will never manifest itself in our body in the same way in so many individuals at the same time, as really to endanger the catholic position which I believe has been especially committed by God to our charge."

The minority consisted of the following gentlemen: Mr. Eddowes Bowman, Manchester, late Classical Professor of Manchester New College; Mr. Henry Bowman, of Manchester; Mr. Robert Philips Greg, of Norcliffe; Mr. John Grundy, of the Dales, near Manchester; Mr. J. T. Hart, of London; Mr. Geo. Long, of London; Mr. John Smale, of London; Mr. J. Aspinall Turner, M.P., of Pendlebury, near Manchester; Mr. William Rayner Wood, of Singleton; Mr. Thomas Wrigley, of Timberhurst; Rev. R. Brook Aspland, of Dukinfield; Rev. Samuel Bache, of Birmingham; Rev. John Colston, of Dean Row and Styal; Rev. Edmund Kell, of Southampton; Rev. Benjamin Mardon, of Sidmouth; Rev. J. H. Ryland, of Bradford; and Rev. Edward Tagart, of Wildwood, Hampstead.

The report that follows is taken from the *Inquirer*, with one or two alterations and additions.

Mr. Field rose to move the resolutions of which he had in substance given notice, and was pressed to withdraw them. This he refused to do, because of the great importance he attached to them. He began by calling on the Secretary to read a minute of the Committee of the 3rd ult. This resolution stated that the Protest had been entered on the minutes out of respect to the Protesters, and that such entry should not be regarded as a precedent. Mr. Field then stated that such things as Protests were wholly irregular; did not lead, and were not meant to lead, to any functional action by the body, but were *ex post facto* criticisms only, and only weakened the government of the College. Protests are framed away from debate, and in ignorance. They are one-eyed as well as one-sided. The Protesters here could not all have known what he would presently shew—that their proposal was illegal. Had they made this proposal at a meeting of Trustees, debate would have informed them so. Mr. Field said that it would not do to leave the entry of such documents to be treated as a matter of discretion or respect, and that it would be better to relieve future Committees from all difficulty by an authoritative expression of opinion. He concluded by moving the following resolution: "That this meeting, having heard with satisfaction the minute of the Committee meeting of the 3rd of April in reference to their entry on the 12th March last, of a Protest from individual Trustees, declares that the official recognition of Protests tends to weaken and render unstable the government of the College, and that such documents should not in future be recorded as part of the College minutes."

This motion was carried *nem. con.*, nearly all the gentlemen who had voted in the minority having left the chapel.

Mr. FIELD then stated that there still was on the minutes of the College a proposal by seventy Trustees, as lawyers say "more or less" (for there was no knowing for what particular reason each man had signed, and many violently disclaimed the 5th reason), so to appoint Theological Professors for the College, as that one particular school of religious thought should be specifically represented in its classes. The object indicated in the 5th reason of the Protest was, so to conduct the theological teaching as to secure the production in the student's mind, by indoctrination and influences *ab extra*, of particular theological results, pretty much, as he understood the project, as a gardener hopes to produce a hybrid flower. What had been already done that day—he (Mr. Field) was delighted to say by so immense a majority—was in fact a declaration that we of this generation would never consent to turn this institution into a mere institution for propagating particular dogmatic conclusions, if we had the legal power to do so. Having resolved, he said, that you would not if you could, I now ask you to resolve that you could not if you would. You have no power or right to do it. I ask you not merely to set the present irregularities straight, but to prevent any future recurrence in after generations, by formally acknowledging that you have no such power, and that your duties are just the other way. Mr. Field knew that the Protesters themselves did not really mean to propound this propagatory theory. They could not be such deserters of the non-subscribing principle of their body. But the words of their fifth reason meant this, and nothing else, and these words were still left part of the minutes of the College. Mr. Field considered that it was not only a duty to the founders of the College, but quite necessary to the very security of the trust property itself, to put on the same record which contained this proposal, an authoritative declaration by the Trustees at large, condemning every scheme tending to the propagation of any particular creed, however clear to us of this day such creed might happen to be. It had been often said what a foolish thing it is to call men who subscribe two guineas a-year Trustees; but the founders of this trust were wiser than that. By giving that name to those to whom the government of the College was entrusted, they meant perpetually to remind them that it was not their own money they were dealing with. The founders were all Arians—

A VOICE: No: the pulpit of this chapel was then occupied by a Unitarian.

Mr. FIELD: Well, then, all the founders but one or two were Arians, and if any school had a right to be specially represented among the Professors it would be the Arian school. Why had not the Protesters proposed to guard by a specially appointed Professor the conclusions of that particular school of thought? Because the Protesters personally did not care for the Arian school. But the founders, so far from requiring their own views to be specially represented, had appointed us Trustees of their property, to see that no particular views whatever were ever favoured in any way. He could not forget that he was then in the city which had given rise to the Hewley suit. This Manchester College Fund might some day give rise to another such suit, and to avoid all risk of such a thing they must rigidly acknowledge in all their records the principles of teaching on which the institution was by law required to be conducted. The Trustees had the most remarkable guide as to what those principles were, because one of the great complaints in the Hewley case was, that the Hewley Trustees had applied their money, amongst other things, to the encouragement of this College, which, said the plaintiffs, is a College merely for the purpose of educating Unitarian ministers. In answer to this charge, Mr. Wellbeloved had stated upon oath the principles upon which the College was established and conducted on this very point of propagation of any particular school of thought. Mr. Wellbeloved's evidence was in these words:

"And this defendant further answering saith, that the Manchester College in the said information mentioned is supported chiefly by Protestant Dissenters of the Presbyterian denomination.

"And this defendant saith that it is an establishment for the purpose principally of supplying the churches of that denomination with a succession of ministers, *but not for the purpose of instruction in the peculiar doctrines of any sect.*

"And this defendant saith that *no such instruction is given*, but that the principle upon which the institution is established and conducted is, that every student shall be left to the free and unbiassed exercise of his own private judgment in matters of religious opinion.

"And this defendant saith, that as the Theological Tutor at the said establishment he most scrupulously adheres to that principle, endeavouring to impart to his pupils such instruction only as shall qualify them *to interpret the Scriptures for themselves*, excite in them a love of truth and the reverence for its dictates,

and form in them a habit of searching the Scriptures.

"And this defendant saith, that it is his invariable practice solemnly to charge his pupils, when they enter on the theological course of studies there, in the name of the God of Truth and of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, in all their studies and inquiries of a religious nature, carefully, impartially and conscientiously to attend to evidence as it lies in the Holy Scriptures, *to embrace or assent to no religious principle or sentiment held or advanced by their Tutor or any one else, but as it shall appear upon the fullest examination to be supported by revelation;* to labour to banish from their hearts all prejudice, prepossession and party zeal, to study through life to live in peace and love with all their fellow-christians, and *steadily to assert for themselves, and freely allow to others, the inalienable rights of judgment and conscience.*"

This evidence was adopted by Mr. Kenrick and all the other Professors, and by all the Trustees of the Lady Hewley Fund. Mr. Wellbeloved's form of charge was taken from that used by the celebrated Dr. Taylor, who was, Mr. Field believed, the Professor of Theology in Warrington College that day a hundred years ago. Dr. Taylor's charge to the students was still more latitudinarian than Mr. Wellbeloved's, for he charged the students conscientiously to attend to evidence as it lies in the Holy Scriptures "or in the nature of things and the dictates of reason," remarkable words omitted by Mr. Wellbeloved. "This College is *not a proper College* for the education of Dissenting ministers of those classes of Dissenters *who require the inculcation of some particular system* of doctrine," are the words of another Tutor when forced to answer by the plaintiffs. But the very thing the Protest requires is such inculcation of a particular system. Looking at the legal position in which their trusts stood, remembering the acerbities of the *odium theologicum* (not unfelt that day), and the constant litigations to which these acerbities were from year to year giving rise, it would be jeopardizing the property and stability of the College not to purge its records from the damaging proposal of the seventy Protesters by a formal acknowledgment by that great meeting of the conditions on which they the Trustees really considered they held their trust. The words in the resolution he was about to propose, affirmatory of the governing principles and negativing the right to teach peculiar doctrines, were adopted, it would be observed, from Mr. Wellbeloved's statement on oath; the proposal deprecated was taken from the language of the Protesters in their fifth reason. Mr. Field concluded by moving—

"That this institution is founded for the sole purpose of giving university learning to students for the Christian ministry amongst non-subscribing Dissenters, without test or confession of faith, and not for the purpose of instruction in the peculiar doctrines of any sect; and that in appointing Professors it would be a violation of this fundamental principle to attempt to secure a representation of the views of any particular school of thought."

Mr. J. Grundy opposed the motion as unnecessary. If the law was as Mr. Field had stated it, the Trustees had no need to declare it. If there were any doubt upon the subject, they ought to have further time for consideration.

Mr. T. Avison also thought the resolution unnecessary. They had already fully effected the object of the meeting, and he was not prepared, without further consideration, to vote for the resolution now proposed. He could not but fear too that the resolution might be interpreted as a declaration of the "No-creed test," which he for one should regard as highly objectionable.

Rev. R. Brook Aspland expressed his regret that Mr. Field had not yielded to the persuasions of those on his own side who had counselled him to withdraw, or at least postpone, his resolutions until they could be more conveniently and completely discussed than was now possible, with a jaded audience and at that late hour. He thought the resolution extremely ungenerous. It looked as if, having the numbers with them, the majority were bent on trampling on those opposed to them. They had carried their point, and ought to rest satisfied. He for one wished to see harmony restored to the College; but he feared, if this resolution were passed, it would excite and keep alive the feeling of alienation and hostility. He therefore moved as an amendment the previous question, which was seconded by Rev. J. H. Ryland.

Mr. W. Shaen supported the resolution. He believed it to be a question of vital importance to the College, and that it was worth while even at that late hour to restrain their impatience for the dinner that was awaiting them a sufficient time to enable them to arrive at a deliberate opinion upon the question. If he could think that the resolution had been dictated by any want of generosity, or was tainted

by any desire to triumph over the beaten, he would have strenuously opposed it; but, on the contrary, he believed it was highly necessary, and that without it the business of the day would be left undone. The Protest was open to three principal objections—1st, from an Unitarian point of view it was an unwise and unworthy attack of two of their most distinguished ministers; secondly, as a question of order between the body of Trustees and the Executive they had appointed at the meeting in January, it was entirely irregular, and tended to destroy the possibility of all proper management of the affairs of the Trust. With those two objections the Trustees had dealt, by the resolution they had already passed. They were, however, both points of mere temporary importance; but the Protest was open to a third objection, which was one of permanent substance, namely, that it sought to divert the very principle upon which the College was founded, and was false to the trusts upon which they held their valuable estates. With this objection the resolutions already passed did not in any way deal; but if it were a sound one, it was absolutely necessary that the Trustees before separating should deal with it, and they could only do so effectually by passing the resolution then under discussion. He belonged to probably a large class of the Trustees, who had subscribed in the first instance without investigating with any great care the history of the foundation of the College, and he had shared what he knew was a common feeling, that to call all annual subscribers of £2. 2*s*. Trustees, was to give them a grand name which was almost ridiculous. The consideration of the recently pending questions had rendered it necessary for him to go more deeply into the matter, and he then became aware of two points which it was important the Trustees should always bear in mind: 1st. That although in administering the amount of their own annual subscriptions they could of course exercise their unfettered discretion, yet that their subscriptions also gave them the power of managing and administering a large amount of property which was not the result of their subscriptions, but was a trust in its strictest sense, of which they were responsible for the due administration, and for which they could be held responsible in a court of law. In the second place, that this trust was not, as he had imagined it to be, to provide for the education of Unitarian ministers, or ministers of any definite school of religious thought, but, as had been abundantly shewn by Mr. Field in moving the resolution, for the purpose of giving academic education to Christian ministers in the broadest possible sense of the word, not only without requiring from them, but also without endeavouring to impose upon them, any adhesion to any particular school of Theology whatever. In short, that it was not and ought not to be made a Unitarian College, but a College of Free Theology, standing upon the broad principle of non-subscription. This being the principle on which they were bound to carry out their trust, it was in point of law a dangerous thing for them to allow to remain on their books, uncancelled and unanswered, a declaration signed by a large number of influential Trustees that a definite school of religious thought ought to be represented in the College. That mistaken principle was upon their books, and remained there as a dangerous precedent which might lead to future hazardous litigation. He therefore called upon them to neutralize it by declaring in a formal and regular manner, as they were asked to do by the resolution he was supporting, their cordial adherence to the grand principle which had been so nobly expressed and so uniformly acted upon by those whom they all looked to as authorities in this matter, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Wellbeloved, and which it was now their duty to commit intact to the keeping of the Theological Professors whose appointment they had that day welcomed and confirmed.

Rev. J. H. Thom said that, while prepared to support the resolution, he desired to disavow participating in the reasons assigned for it by Mr. Field, so far as they charged upon the Protesters the intention of fastening upon the College a definite creed. Although some words of the Protest might seem to give a countenance to such an imputation, he could not, after the disavowals made that day, suppose that such was their intention.

The resolution was then put and carried by a considerable majority.

Dr. Beard, in proposing "That copies of the above resolutions be sent to Rev. J. J. Tayler and Rev J. Martineau," said he should have been satisfied to make the motion without any comment, had it not been intimated that this was a movement conducted by young men. He was no longer a young man, yet he was quite willing to share with the Committee the responsibility of the appointment of Mr. Martineau. As soon as it became clear that there would be a vacancy he had looked round for a successor, and could see no one whose qualifications were equal to that gentleman's. Something had been

said about opinions held by Mr. Martineau. Were they there to try opinions? If so, let it be avowed. Any attempt to make this a question of identity of opinion was an invasion of religious liberty as long understood, fostered and enjoyed in our body. But in truth it was a question of competency. Who was so able to handle the great religious questions which are now agitating men's minds throughout Europe, nay, the world? If they wanted their ministers to receive a training in a truly scientific theology, they had done well to support the Committee by an overpowering majority. Indeed, a College among English Unitarians without Mr. Tayler and Mr. Martineau was a practical solecism. They are your strong men; you cannot afford to forego their services.

The thanks of the Trustees were given to the Chairman, and the meeting dispersed a little after five o'clock.

Subsequently to the publication of the report, Mr. Bache published in the *Inquirer* the following letter of disavowal and remonstrance:

Sir,—In justice to myself and to other gentlemen whose names are recorded in your last number (May 2) as forming the minority on the resolution proposed by Mr. Mark Philips at the recent special meeting in Manchester of the Trustees of this institution, I desire to record also in your pages my most distinct and emphatic *disavowal* of the interpretation which Mr. Edwin Field has arbitrarily assumed as the *only* interpretation which could be put on the fifth reason given in the Protest which I signed some time ago, and should still feel it my painful duty, under similar circumstances, to sign again. I am not about to re-open a vexed question which is now closed; but when I find that my name is recorded in your pages in connection with the before-mentioned Protest, and that then a resolution is passed reflecting on the conduct of the Protesters for having done that which they have *not* done—but the very opposite—so as to make it seem as though the Protesters wished "so to conduct the theological teaching as to secure the production in the student's mind, by indoctrination and influence *ab extra*, of particular theological results," I feel that I have a right to demand the insertion of my most positive and emphatic *disclaimer* of this most unjust and unwarrantable imputation.

I must further observe, that when the *special* business for which that *special* meeting had been summoned was done—when (in the words of Mr. T. Avison) those assembled "had already fully effected the object of the meeting"—I concluded that the meeting was ended, and that no other question *could* be entertained than that which had been *officially* announced. Under this conviction I left the meeting. Had I remained, I should have protested, however ineffectually, against the introduction of any new business; and, failing that objection, might then have moved as an amendment that which is indispensable to render Mr. Field's resolution really effectual, viz. the addition to it of the following *italicised clause*: "—and that in appointing Professors it would be a violation of this fundamental principle to attempt to secure a representation of the views of any particular school of thought," *either by a direct proposal to that effect, or by actually confining the appointment to those Professors who belong to such particular school.*

With unfeigned and very high admiration of Mr. Field's vigilant zeal for the preservation of our religious *liberty*, and only denying altogether the justice of its application in the present instance,

I am, Sir, very respectfully yours,

SAMUEL BACHE.

Edgbaston, May 7.

Before closing the subject, we think it due to Mr. Martineau to reprint the Address recently transmitted to him by some of his former pupils, and his excellent reply to it. Few will be more rejoiced than ourselves if his Professorial career henceforth fulfils his present purposes.

TO THE REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

Dear Sir,—In the present critical position of Manchester New College, more especially with regard to your own services as Professor, we think it right, as your former pupils, to express the respect and gratitude we feel towards yourself, and our regret at the embarrassing circumstances in which you have been placed. We know from experience something of the value of your instructions. We thank you most deeply and sincerely for the admirable guidance which you have afforded us in many departments of difficult intellectual inquiry. But we cannot limit ourselves to the acknowledgment simply of an intellectual obligation. It is our duty, also, to bear testimony to that devout spirit of Christian faith, and that earnestness of Christian conviction, which we have continually recognized as forming the groundwork of your instructions. In our opinion, there can scarcely be any teaching more valuable to students of theology, or more in harmony with the requirements of the age, than that which, like your own, exhibits the union of deep and original research

with a truly reverential spirit, and is devoted, above all things, to the vindication of our common faith.

It is for these reasons that we most earnestly desire that the benefit of your instructions may be continued to the present and future students of the College. Having heard with great pleasure of the appointments recently made by the Committee, we cannot but express a hope that they may be fully and consistently carried out, and that you may now consider yourself enabled, without scruple, to accept the duties which thus devolve upon you. We feel confident that such an arrangement is well calculated to promote the future prosperity of the College.

We remain, dear Sir,
Gratefully and affectionately yours,

T. E. Poynting, Monton.
David Davis, Norwich.
John Ashton Nicholls.
Paul Fearon.
R. D. Darbishire.
Charles Beard, Gee Cross.
J. H. Hutton, Manchester.
Samuel Roberts.
W. A. Darbishire.
J. C. A. Scott.
H. W. Crosskey, Glasgow.
A. W. Worthington, Bridgwater.
J. J. Bishop, Blakely.
John Dendy, Stourbridge.
Brooke Herford, Sheffield.
F. H. Hill, Merthyr Tydvil.
E. C. Potter.
W. Napier, Newtown Limavaddy.
Rupert Potter.
R. C. Jones, Bristol.
S. A. Steinthal, Liverpool.
Vernon Darbishire.
T. Carter, Lewes.
C. C. Coe, Leicester.
J. T. Whitehead, Altrincham.
W. Potter.
Edwin Smith.

April 21st, 1857.

REPLY.

My dear Mr. Dendy,—On my return home after a few days' absence, I find the Address of sympathy and confidence in which many of my former College pupils generously interpose to lighten the difficulties of my new task. Such an expression of regard is among the most precious fruits of laborious years. Proceeding as it chiefly does from men no longer inexperienced in life, and occupying or sure to occupy positions due only to character, knowledge and capacity, its testimony has an intrinsic value beyond its deep interest to the Teacher's memory and affection.

At the same time, I am profoundly conscious that this friendly estimate of my past work is true rather of its aim than of its performance: of whose manifold deficiencies I could too sincerely speak, did not the discussions of the recent crisis render such words unseasonable and superfluous. Time alone can show whether I delude myself with the hope of better realizing my own conception under the new conditions of daily devotion to the academic work, and the constant counsel and sympathy of my accomplished senior colleague. But, thus far, the only credit I can take to myself as a Teacher is, for an honest desire to be always just to the sentiments of others, and ingenuous in the statement of my own; to respect the independent working of the Student's mind, and never transgress the limit that separates guidance from dictation; to conceal no difficulty, to shelter no fiction, but encourage a simple and reverential trust in whatever God has made real or has set forth as true and good.

Hitherto it has not devolved upon me to conduct any portion of the special studies for the Christian ministry. Henceforth it will be otherwise. And no change could be more congenial to my deepest faith and affection, than that which enables me to enter the sacred circle of Christian doctrine, and to share more directly in sending forth faithful men, well furnished as preachers of Christ's holy Gospel, and pioneers of his heavenly kingdom.

If I do not mistake the signs of the times, many threatening clouds are passing away from us; and with candid interpretation and hearty support of one another, we may hope for a blessing on the future, not unworthy of the good examples of the past.

I pray you to convey my affectionate acknowledgments to the friends whom you represent, and to believe me, my dear Mr. Dendy, ever faithfully yours,

James Martineau.

Liverpool, April 24, 1857.

BOLTON DISTRICT UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

April 30th.—The sixty-second half-yearly meeting of this Association was held this day at Hindley, a chapelry in the parish of Wigan. The chapel, one of the old Presbyterian foundations, has been recently completely renovated, having undergone considerable alterations, and the Sunday-school contiguous to it has been greatly enlarged. The pulpit has been removed to the top of the building, which, with other changes in the seats, has greatly improved the appearance of the interior,

and added to its commodiousness. An inscription in front of the gallery sets forth that "this chappel was erected by Richard Crook, of Abram, Anno Dom. 1700." Another panel contains the words, in Greek characters, Luke ii. 14, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will to men." Tablets on the walls preserve the memory of two worthies who have filled the pastoral office to this congregation. The Rev. Joseph Bourn is described as having been "minister to this society 19 years;" and the Rev. Jonathan Hodgkinson, "during the space of 33 years." A small burial-ground surrounds the building, where lie the remains of many families who "through evil report and good report" have borne their testimony to the principles of Nonconformity and true religion.

The religious service of the day (an afternoon one) was commenced by Rev. James Whitehead; and the sermon was preached by Rev. Franklin Baker to a large and attentive audience. The attendance from various parts of the district manifested the increasing interest and pleasure which is taken in these assemblings. Among those present we noticed Robert Heywood, Esq., C. J. Darbishire, Esq., Revds. M. C. Frankland, Probert, J. Wright, J. Ragland, James Whitehead, James Taylor and F. Baker.

Tea and other refreshments were served in the school-room, where a party of nearly a hundred were accommodated. The hour of tea is an hour of friendly and pleasant conversation. The social spirit encouraged at such gatherings is not the least of the advantages which accrue from them. The interest and activity evinced by both young and old, besides being immediately beneficial to the cause in its higher aspects, leave a legacy of useful recollections for the coming generation. It is hardly possible to overrate the importance of such *réunions*.

Mr. Ragland's state of health, though considerably improved, led him to decline the duties of the chair, which he delegated to Robert Heywood, Esq. The consent of the latter gentleman being obtained to this arrangement, after some allusions, in which he carried with him the sympathies of the meeting, to the sorrows and sickness with which the respected minister of the Hindley congregation had been visited, and his joy at his convalescence, he proposed the health of Her Majesty the Queen. This was followed by the "Bolton District Unitarian Association —may its great objects be crowned with success." The Secretary, being called upon to respond to this sentiment, congratulated the meeting on many signs of improvement in the congregational institutions of the district. A progressive advancement of liberal opinions was traceable in almost every religious denomination, except the Catholic. This was a proper cause of rejoicing to the Unitarian body, whose prosperity and success must be coincident with the loosening of error, whether in theology or legislation, and with every step which was made towards a free and comprehensive system of thought. Mr. Baker, in commenting upon the state of things in our own body, complained of the frequent absence of Unitarian families, or members thereof, from public worship, amounting in some cases to its total neglect.

The Chairman next called upon Mr. Wright in connection with the great Nonconformist sentiment of Civil and Religious Liberty. In addition to many striking and valuable remarks illustrative of its importance and necessity to good government and a healthy religious life, that gentleman adverted to the imperfect degree in which it was enjoyed in foreign countries, and especially in the case of the Transylvanian Unitarians.

Mr. David Shaw, at the request of the Chairman, made some remarks in recommendation of pure and unadulterated Christianity.

Among other speakers, the meeting was addressed by Rev. James Whitehead, Rev. M. C. Frankland and Rev. James Taylor.

The cause of our Sunday-schools drew up several teachers, who endeavoured to stimulate others to devote themselves to the useful work of Sunday instruction. It is without doubt in this field that we must labour for our future harvests.

The autumn meeting of the Association will take place at Walmsley, on Thursday, September 17th. Rev. J. Whitehead, preacher; Rev. J. Ragland, supporter.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF BELFAST.

The annual meeting of this Society was held on Sunday, May 17, and the following evening. The Society was established a quarter of a century ago, and the objects contemplated by its

founders were, "to maintain the Sufficiency of Scripture as a perfect rule of faith; to vindicate the right of Private Judgment and Free Inquiry on religious subjects; and to promote a knowledge of the genuine doctrines of Christianity, founded on this great truth, that *there is but one God, the Father.*" The sermons were preached by Rev. R. Brook Aspland, of Dukinfield. In the morning, he addressed the members of the First Presbyterian Church, and vindicated the ways of God's providence in protecting the interests of truth and securing human progress amidst the conflicts of parties, and spite of the obstacles of infidelity on the one hand, and of uncharitableness and persecution on the other. In the afternoon, he addressed the members of the Second Presbyterian Church on the characteristics of Christian Worship, taking as the basis of his remarks the Saviour's instructions on that subject to the woman of Samaria. The services were listened to with deep attention by large congregations, and collections were made for the Society which amounted to £46.

On the following evening, the annual meeting of the Society was held, not, as on previous occasions, in one of the meeting-houses, but in the Corn Exchange Rooms, Victoria Street, a large and elegant room, which was nearly filled by a highly respectable assembly of ladies and gentlemen, including a large proportion of the neighbouring Unitarian ministers. The chair was taken by John Andrews, Esq., of Comber, High Sheriff of the county of Down. He was supported by Robt. Grimshaw, Esq., High Sheriff of the county of Antrim, Michael Andrews, Esq., J. M. Darbishire, Esq., H. Darbishire, Esq., Rev. Dr. Montgomery, Rev. J. Scott Porter, Rev. C. J. M'Alester, Rev. John Orr, Rev. Wm. Crozier, Rev. H. Moore, Rev. John Crozier, Rev. Thos. Smyth, Rev. Mr. M'Cammon. The attendance so much exceeded anticipations, that, notwithstanding a bountiful supply, the tables had to be twice served. Tea having been at length finished, the chair was taken by the High Sheriff of the county, who after expressing his high appreciation of the honour done him in calling him to preside over such a meeting, disavowed all participation in a sectarian spirit and in a mere proselytizing zeal.

Rev. C. J. M'Alester read the report of the Committee.

Michael Andrews, Esq., the Treasurer, read the financial statement, shewing that the receipts of the year had been £137. 10*s.*, and the expenditure, £123. 13*s.* 8*d.* On the motion of the High Sheriff for the county of Antrim, seconded by Rev. Mr. M'Cammon, the reports of the Committee and Treasurer were accepted and approved. Mr. Jas. Grimshaw, a venerable patriarch, numbering nearly ninety years, moved the adoption of a resolution in acknowledgment of the services of Mr. Aspland the previous day. In seconding the resolution, Mr. J. M. Darbishire spoke with earnest feeling of the services rendered to Unitarian Christianity by the *Christian Reformer*, and his desire to see it in the enjoyment of that general support to which he believed it was so well entitled.

Rev. R. Brook Aspland gratefully acknowledged the candid and friendly spirit in which his services had been received, and paid a glowing tribute to the Irish Unitarians generally and to Dr. Montgomery in particular, the latter of whom had been so largely instrumental in laying the foundation of the Dissenters' Chapels Act, and the others had so zealously aided in the arduous struggle which was eventually crowned by a signal victory.

Rev. C. J. M'Alester then moved the following resolution: "That the various associations that exist in England and America for the advocacy and propagation of Unitarian doctrines are entitled to our warmest sympathies, and that we hereby tender them, in grateful acknowledgment for the efforts they are making, not only to sustain the cause of liberal Christianity against popular errors at home, but also to extend it wherever opportunity offers in distant lands."—The resolution was seconded by Rev. John Montgomery.

Rev. Dr. Montgomery moved in a long and very eloquent speech, which we must not attempt to report, the following resolution: "That, acknowledging as we do the many and high excellences of the Authorized Version of the Scriptures, which is in constant use in our churches, schools and families, and grateful as we feel to Divine Providence for the truly valuable services which it has rendered to the cause of religion wherever the English language is spoken, we are, nevertheless, impressed by the unanimity with which divines and scholars of almost every Christian denomination have declared that it stands in need of several corrections, both in its text and translation,

in order to bring it into a more exact conformity with the sacred originals; and that we instruct our Committee to take such steps as they may deem expedient for procuring a thorough and impartial revision of the Authorized Version of the Bible, to be executed and set forth by public authority."—Seconded by Rev. T. Smyth.

Rev. J. Scott Porter then moved—"That we deeply sympathize with our brethren in a common faith, the Unitarian churches of Transylvania, under the trials and hardships to which they have been exposed, in consequence of their attachment to the distinguished and fundamental doctrine of the Gospel of Christ—viz., that 'there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.' That we thank God for the example of patience, fortitude and perseverance which has been placed before us by them and their predecessors for two centuries, in bearing their conscientious testimony to this great truth, in the face of much persecution, frequent oppression, and continual discouragement. That we most highly approve of the noble struggle in which they are now engaged to preserve for their children and descendants the advantages of an enlightened and unfettered education, with all its privileges. That our Committee be instructed to afford them such assistance towards accomplishing this object as the funds at their disposal will admit; and that we earnestly recommend their case to the generosity of all our churches and members who may have it in their power to aid their effort for the valuable purpose which they have in view." In enforcing the resolution, Mr. Porter gave a succinct and very interesting history of the rise of Unitarianism in Transylvania.—The resolution was seconded by Rev. William Crozier.

Other resolutions were spoken to by Rev. John Crozier, Mr. G. K. Smith, Rev. R. B. Aspland, Mr. Herbert Darbishire, and others. But our available space is exhausted, and we must close our brief report of a meeting which presented many features of interest, with stating that in moving the thanks of the meeting to the High Sheriff, the Rev. J. Scott Porter bore his testimony to that gentleman's liberal and unwearied support of Unitarian institutions, and stated that if he had any distaste to mere proselytism, it was to that kind which involved uncharitable feelings, and worked on the necessities, the fears and the selfishness of other men.

IRISH UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN SOCIETY.

The anniversary sermons of this Society were preached on Sunday, the 17th of May, by the Rev. W. H. Channing; in the morning in Strand Street, from Ephesians iii. 20, 21; and in the evening in Eustace Street, from Romans viii. 16, 17, 28, 38, 39. The attendance on both occasions was very numerous, and the collections considerably exceeded those of any previous anniversary.

On the evening of Tuesday, the 19th, the members and friends of the Society held a social meeting in the Rotundo. Upwards of 350 persons were present. In the absence of the President, the chair was kindly taken by Philip M. Taylor, Esq., and the proceedings opened with a hymn composed for the occasion, and sung by the united choirs of the two congregations.

The Chairman briefly addressed the meeting on the object for which they were assembled, and introduced as the first sentiment, "The Irish Unitarian Christian Society," which the Rev. George A. Armstrong, as Secretary, suitably acknowledged.

The Rev. Thomas F. Thomas proposed, "Our hearty welcome to the Rev. W. H. Channing, and our warmest thanks for the admirable sermons delivered by him on Sunday last on behalf of the Society."

Mr. Channing, in responding, was earnestly greeted by the meeting, and his observations frequently interrupted by bursts of applause.

The Chairman gave as the next sentiment, "May the efforts made to procure a revision of the Authorized Translation of the Holy Scriptures be speedily attended with a success commensurate to the importance of the work!"

Rev. J. Scott Porter replied in a speech of great energy and power.

Mr. James Haughton then proposed, "Our English Brethren: may Christian truth be more and more widely diffused under their auspices!"

Rev. R. Brook Aspland responded, amidst the most cordial manifestations of the interest and sympathy of the audience.

Rev. Henry Alexander introduced with great ability the last sentiment of the evening, "Civil and Religious Liberty all the World over;" and after some very interesting and happy observations from Mr. Shaw, whom the Secretary called up as a lay visitor from England, the Dismissal Hymn was

sung, and the meeting separated at an advanced hour of the night.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY.

We had prepared for the department of Critical Notices of this No. of the *Christian Reformer*, an article on Mr. Dunn's recent pamphlet directed against his Unitarian critics, but it is reluctantly postponed. We cannot, however, but congratulate our readers on the moral courage and courteous urbanity of Mr. Mark Philips, Mr. W. Price, M.P., and the other Unitarian gentlemen who recently attended the anniversary of the Society, and publicly protested against the infraction on the Society's principles which has been going on for so long a time. The noble Chairman, Lord John Russell, secured fair play and a hearing to our Unitarian friends, and, when the proceedings were over, expressed an opinion that the case on the part of the Unitarians was fairly stated and with great temper. Mr. Dunn's pamphlet was on all sides disclaimed, as possessing no authority, and not a voice was raised on its behalf. The spirit of "evangelical orthodoxy," indeed, found a representative in Mr. Gurney Hoare, who with more bluntness than courtesy indicated the wish that Unitarians would leave the Society and not trouble its managers with their money or their objections, intimating that they would not be missed, and that their presence frightened others away. Although these remarks elicited cheers from some of the audience, they would not bear calm reflection, and before the close of the meeting the speaker expressed his regret for what he had said.—Sir Walter Stirling spoke with disapprobation of Mr. Hoare's attack on the Unitarian body, and hoped no gentleman of that persuasion would be induced by what had taken place to leave the Society. Mr. Philips's amendment was negatived by a large majority; but we imagine Mr. Dunn and his friends will look with little satisfaction on the proceedings of the day, and that, spite of the rejection of the resolution declaring the teaching of orthodox doctrines to be an infringement of the fundamental principles of the Society, the end for which Mr. Philips and his friends attended will be found to have been in part at least secured. Of this at least we feel a strong conviction, that continued watchfulness on the part of those members of the Society who wish it to be conducted in accordance with the principles on which it was originally established, and the assertion of their opinions at the annual meetings in a manner like that adopted on this occasion by Mr. Philips, Mr. Price, Mr. Preston and Mr. Solly, will eventually secure the fair administration of this important Society. It sometimes falls out that a minority, possessed of a good case and asserting it with firmness and good temper, gain a moral victory, while their more numerous opponents speedily retire from the post which they seemed to win with ease.

OUR JUNE MEETINGS.

The approaching meetings hold out varied attractions to our Unitarian friends. The Unitarian and the Sunday-School Associations, the Christian Tract and the London District Unitarian Societies, will during Whitsuntide occupy the attention of our London friends, as later on in the month will the College Examination, the meeting of the Hibbert Trustees and Dr. Williams's Trustees, and the laying of the foundation-stone of the New Gravel-Pit chapel at Hackney. In Lancashire and Cheshire, the opening of the new chapel at Rochdale, and the Provincial Assembly at Dean Row, will assemble many Unitarians, and raise some important discussions. May the spirit that prevails in each and all be that of pure Christian zeal and warm brotherly love!

ADELAIDE UNITARIAN CHURCH, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The foundation-stone of this church was laid on the 23rd of December, 1856, by John Baker, Esq., J.P., M.L.C., of Morialta, who delivered a speech to a large number of ladies and gentlemen assembled to witness the ceremony. The Rev. J. C. Woods gave an exposition of the principles of the new church, and concluded with prayer. A social meeting followed, when 200 sat down to tea. Several excellent speeches were made on the occasion, one speaker remarking that a year and a half ago only 12 Unitarians avowed themselves as supporters of a congregation in South Australia, and that now 200 persons were earnest in the cause.